MONDAY
December 15, 2025

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
20 Pages ₹ 6.00

THE HINDU

www.thehindu.com

INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

https://newsth.live/fb
https://newsth.live/x
https://newsth.live/ig

RNI No. KARENG/1970/49945

Vol. 56 • No. 295

Printed at » Chennai » Coimbatore » Bengaluru » Hyderabad » Madurai » Noida » Visakhapatnam » Thiruvananthapuram » Kochi » Vijayawada » Mangaluru » Tiruchirapalli » Kolkata » Hubballi » Mohali » Malappuram » Mumbai » Lucknow » Cuttack » Patna

omegawatches.com

SPEEDMASTER GREY SIDE OF THE MOON

Deep space exploration began with pioneers and one trusted chronograph. Metallic grey ceramic meets Speedmaster moon-landing heritage, celebrated in the Co-Axial Master Chronometer Calibre 3869, which is laser-ablated to represent the lunar surface. Now, the icon is leaner, sharper, and more precise. The Grey Side enters a new phase.

OMEGA

Franchise Boutiques Bangalore
(Now Open) Mall of Asia 8068572654
UB City Mall 080 40982106

J BG-BGE

MONDAY
December 15, 2025

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
20 Pages ₹ 6.00

THE HINDU

www.thehindu.com

INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

https://newsth.live/fb
https://newsth.live/x
https://newsth.live/ig

RNI No. KARENG/1970/49945

Vol. 56 • No. 295

Printed at » Chennai » Coimbatore » Bengaluru » Hyderabad » Madurai » Noida » Visakhapatnam » Thiruvananthapuram » Kochi » Vijayawada » Mangaluru » Tiruchirapalli » Kolkata » Hubballi » Mohali » Malappuram » Mumbai » Lucknow » Cuttack » Patna

KOLKATA MESSI EVENT

Organiser remanded in 14-day police custody

NEWS » PAGE 10

DELHI DEMONSTRATION

Congress holds rally against 'vote theft'

NEWS » PAGE 11

COMMANDER ASSASSINATED

Israel's action imperils ceasefire, says Hamas

WORLD » PAGE 14

ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVE

A people-led intelligence movement

T.N. villages generate systematic climate data

OPINION » PAGE 9

FACILE WIN

Indian bowlers call the shots in third T20I

SPORT » PAGE 15

NEARBY

CM, Dy. CM flag 'poll irregularities'

BENGALURU
Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Sunday visited the national capital to participate in the 'Vote Chor, Gaddi Chhod' rally held by the Congress. » PAGE 6

State yet to procure sanitary pads this year

BENGALURU
The State government is yet to supply Shuchi kits (sanitary napkin kits) to adolescent girls aged 10 to 18 in government and aided schools, colleges and hostels. » PAGE 4

EDUCATIONPLUS » PAGE 17

11 dead as gunmen fire on Jewish event in Sydney

One suspect killed, another critically injured; 29 wounded hospitalised; Australian PM Anthony Albanese condemns 'targeted attack'; Netanyahu accuses Australia of having fuelled anti-Semitism

Reuters
Associated Press
SYDNEY

At least 11 people were killed and 29 wounded when gunmen fired on a Jewish holiday event at Sydney's Bondi Beach on Sunday in what Australian police and officials described as a terrorist attack.

One suspected gunman was killed and another was in a critical condition, New South Wales Police Commissioner Mal Lanyon told a press conference. At least 29 people injured, including two police officers, were hospitalised, he said.

The police were investigating whether a third gunman was involved, and a bomb disposal unit was working on several suspected improvised explosive devices, Mr. Lanyon said. Mike Burgess, a top intelligence official, said one of the suspects was known to authorities but had not been deemed an immediate threat.

Rescue on: Emergency workers transporting a person to hospital on a stretcher after a shooting on the Bondi Beach on Sunday. AP

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese convened a meeting of the country's National Security Council and condemned the attack, saying the evil that was unleashed was "beyond comprehension".

"This is a targeted attack on Jewish Australians on the first day of Hanukkah, which should be a day of joy, a celebration of faith," he said. "At this dark moment for our nation, our police and security agencies are working to determine anyone associated with this outrage."

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi took to X to condemn the "ghastly terrorist attack". "On behalf of the people of India, I extend my sincere condolences to the families who lost their loved ones. We stand in solidarity with the people of Australia in this hour of grief. India has zero tolerance towards terrorism and supports the fight against all forms and manifestations of terrorism."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu accused Australia's government of having fuelled anti-Semitism in the period leading up to the shooting.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10

Bihar leader Nitin Nabin is new BJP working president

Nistula Hebbar
Amarnath Tewary
NEW DELHI

The BJP's Parliamentary Board on Sunday notified the appointment of Bihar Minister and five-time MLA Nitin Nabin as the party's national working president, ending months of suspense. He is expected to be formally elected president in January. The party will endorse the election at its National Council meeting in April.

The incumbent president, Union Minister J.P. Nadda, is on an extension. He had served as working president for a few months under then national president Amit Shah.

Mr. Nabin, 45, thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah. "I also want to thank the members of the Parliamentary Board... I will be working to strengthen the BJP with an approach of *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas*. I also want to thank the party workers," he said. The immediate challenge before him are Tamil Nadu, Kerala, West Bengal, Assam, and Puducherry Assembly polls next year.

Nitin Nabin

Congratulating Mr. Nabin, Mr. Modi called him a hard-worker.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10

Veteran Cong. leader Shamanur dies at 94

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Veteran Congress leader and Davangere South MLA Shamanur Shivashankarappa passed away due to multi-organ failure and age-related complications at a private hospital in Bengaluru on Sunday evening. He was 94.

Senior-most legislator

The senior-most legislator in Karnataka, and one of the senior-most in the country, Mr. Shivashankarappa was the national president of the Akhila Bharata Veerashaiva Mahasabha and a tall leader of the Veerashaiva-Lingayat community. Born on June 16, 1931, in Davangere, Mr. Shivashankarappa rose from a modest background to become a tall figure in Karnataka's public life.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 6

Snow-capped

Fresh snowfall blankets the Baltal area of Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday, on the route along the Amarnath track. PTI

State prepares roadmap to mitigate losses

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

Accordingto the Karnataka State Disaster Risk Reduction (KSDRR) Road Map 2025-30, which provides a vulnerability profile of the State, 80% of the State's geographical area is prone to drought, 22% is prone to moderate earthquake and 24% prone to cyclones, heavy winds, etc.

With this in the backdrop, Karnataka, which incurred a cumulative loss of over ₹1.22 lakh crore due to natural disasters between 2015 and 2021, has prepared a roadmap and set 2030 as the time frame to cut such losses by 75%.

The KSDMA has prepared the road map. for a "disaster-resilient Karnataka'' to reduce mortalities, economic loss and casualties.

DETAILED REPORT
» PAGE 6

La Niña, cold dry air from Siberia contributed to the winter chill

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Several districts in north interior Karnataka and Bengaluru experienced a steep drop in temperatures in the past week between December 8 and 14. What contributed to this? An India Meteorological Department (IMD) and a Bangalore Professor have decoded this.

They have cited an interplay between global La Niña conditions, synoptic advection from the Siberian High and local radiative physics for this phenomenon.

Kamsali Nagaraja, Professor at the Department of Physics, Bangalore University, and IMD Scientist Chanabasanagouda S. Patil said that to understand why a region geographically closer to the Equator experienced such biting cold, one must look thousands of kilometres away to the Pacific Ocean, where the 2025 winter unfolded under the shadow of La Niña.

The duo said that this global atmospheric phenomenon, characterised by cooler-than-average sea surface temperatures, acted as a conductor for the planetary weather orchestra.

People wear warm clothes to shield themselves from the cold weather in Bengaluru on Sunday. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

Why harsher

It strengthened the trade winds and modified global circulation patterns, effectively loading the dice for a harsher winter over the Indian subcontinent.

While La Niña set the stage, the primary actor was the Siberian High, a massive, semi-permanent collection of cold, dry air that accumulates over northern Asia. Typically blocked by the Himalayas, a specific pressure configuration this December unlocked the gates, allowing this continental air to escape its usual boundaries, the duo said.

They added that a perfect synoptic storm facilitated this southward migration of cold air, which resulted in Vijayapura district and Bidar district recording 7 °C and 7.4 °C with a departure of nearly 8°C from the normal. Besides, Bengaluru, which is usually insulated by its urban heat, saw airport temperatures drop to 12.9 °C.

Prof. Nagaraja and Mr. Patil said that the winds, however, only brought the cold air to Karnataka. They said that the extreme severity of the freeze was dictated by the microscopic physics of the boundary layer, specifically a process known as "nocturnal radiative cooling".

'Open window' effect

The atmosphere during this week was exceptionally dry, particularly at the mid-tropospheric level, effectively stripping the earth of its natural blanket. Water vapour and clouds usually trap heat radiating from the ground, but with clear skies and arid air, the earth lost its warmth directly to space at a rapid rate after sunset. This "open window" effect caused the mercury to crash by 15 degrees or more from day to night, turning pleasant afternoons into biting nights, Prof. Nagaraja and Mr. Patil said.

Infrastructure projects caught in a limbo in city

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

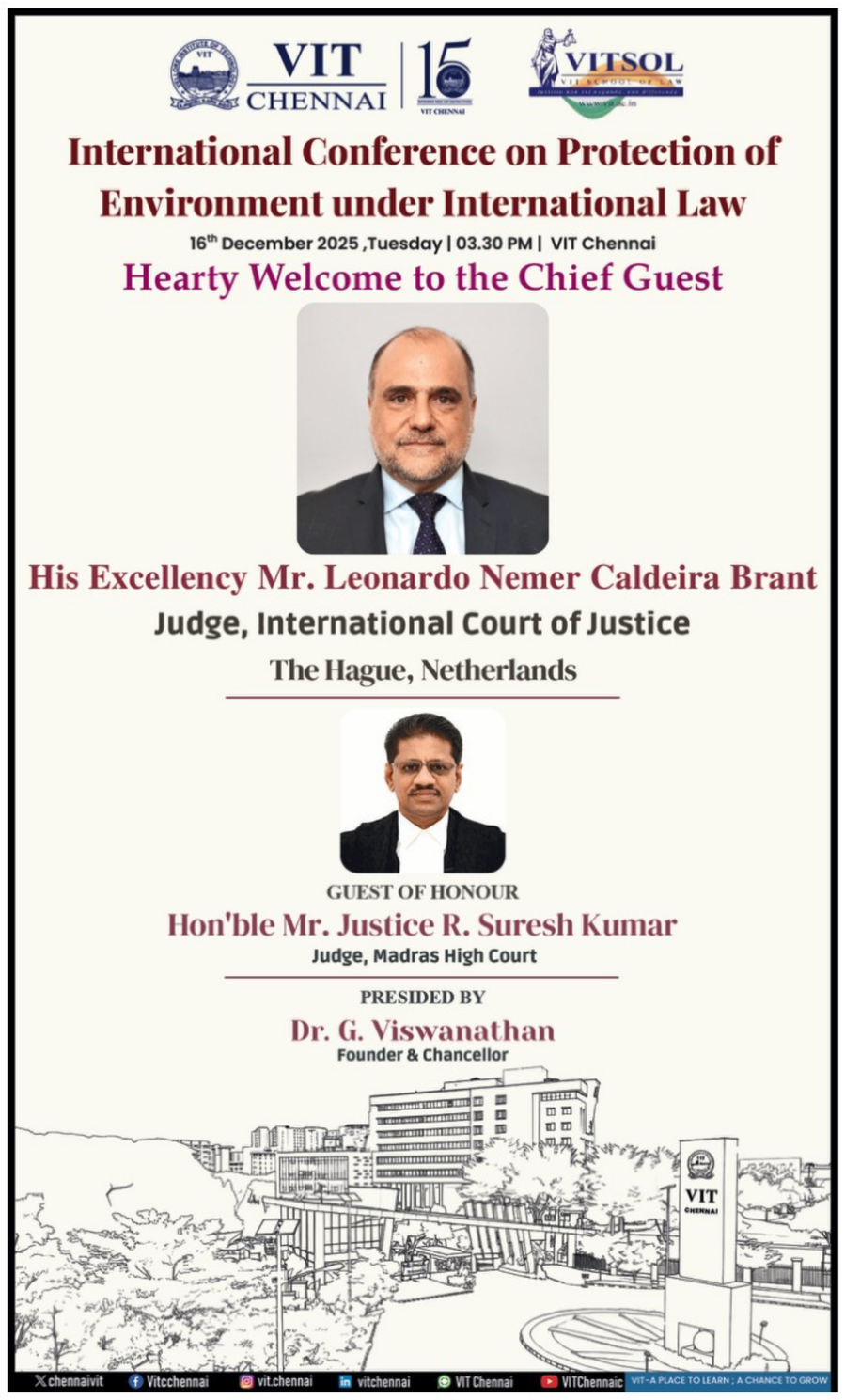
The entire city of Bengaluru seems dug up, road space taken up, barricaded by ongoing infrastructure projects, adding to the already notorious traffic congestion of the city.

From metro works, white-topping of roads to underground electric cabling work, all add to the chaos. But what irritates commuters in the city most are infrastructure projects taken up to ease congestion, but are caught in a limbo for years now and are adding to travel times everyday.

Ejipura flyover, which has triggered a host of memes and jokes online, comes to mind immediately. But there are many more such projects – flyovers in Yelahanka, RR Nagar, underpass at Kanteerava Studio, half complete double decker flyover, for instance.

In 2025, the city saw one such project stuck for many years now finally thrown open for the public – the Hosakerehalli flyover on Outer Ring Road, even as others are still caught in a limbo.

The Hindu will revisit all these projects in a multipart series "Caught in a limbo" starting today.



K.R. DEEPAK

Arshdeep — adept at swinging it his way and rising to the occasion

In the last three-and-a-half years that he has been an international cricketer the left-arm pacer has displayed resilience and mental toughness apart from immense skills; as India heads into the final straight of preparations ahead of the defence of T20 World Cup crown, Arshdeep will be keen to bounce back from the mauling in the second T20I

R. Kaushik

Thursday was supposed to be a happy homecoming for a trio of local lads in the first men's international to be played in New Chandigarh. Much was expected of the Punjab triumvirate of vice-captain Shubman Gill, his opening partner Abhishek Sharma and Arshdeep Singh, the country's leading wicket-taker in Twenty20 Internationals. Instead, each of them disappointed in the team's crushing 51-run defeat by South Africa, a result that helped the visitors square the five-match series at 1-1.

Gill, who has had a miserable run since his return to the T20 national side at the Asia Cup in the UAE in September, courted a golden duck for the first time while Abhishek's flourish was brief - two sixes in an 8-ball 17. Long before that, Arshdeep had had an evening to forget, conceding 54 runs in his four overs, his second-most expensive spell in the format, while going wicketless.

Just two nights previously, in the opener in Cuttack, the left-arm swing exponent had nicked off Quinton de Kock in the first over of South Africa's stiff chase of 176 on a tacky track, and followed it up with the scalp of the dangerous Tristan Stubbs in his next over to an excellent catch behind the sticks by Jitesh Sharma. It was Arshdeep at his penetrative best; he was getting nice shape with the new ball and his disciplines were spot on. Such was the damage he had inflicted in his two-over spell (two for 14) that he wasn't required to bowl again, the rest of the bowling group combining to send the Proteas packing for 74.

In New Chandigarh, after winning a rare toss, India opted to chase, understandable given that that is the preferred mode of operation in 20-over cricket these days and because the dew is such a prominent factor in India at this time of the year. South Africa, of course, were far better than 74 all out, and so they reiterated with de Kock in the forefront of their impressive tally of 213 for four.

The wicketkeeper-batter had made a seventh ODI century against India in the decider in Visakhapatnam on December 6, an effort that was in vain with Yashasvi Jaiswal, Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli muscling the hosts to a commanding nine-wicket win with 61 deliveries to spare as they made a chase of 271 appear ridiculously straightforward. Having followed up the century with a duck, de Kock was determined to leave his mark once again, and he unleashed a flurry of strokes that drove India to despair.

Arshdeep went for 20 in his first two overs, not great but not awful either, when Suryakumar Yadav brought him back for the 11th over, with the visitors on 90 for one. With 107 wickets from 69 matches at the start of Thursday's play, the 26-year-old was entrusted with the responsibility of snapping a burgeoning stand of 52 (at the time) for the second wicket between de Kock and Aiden Markram, the captain. Instead, he ended up conceding 18 runs during a nightmare 13-ball over that included seven wides, including four on the bounce and six from seven deliveries.

The provocation for those four wides was a first-ball six from de Kock, who latched on to a slot ball outside off and slammed it over long-off. It was the cue for Arshdeep to stay away from the left-hander's hitting arc, but in his desire to make him fetch the ball, he repeatedly transgressed the wide line outside the off-stump. Not all of them were *massive* wides, but given how reluctant the umpires are to give the benefit of the doubt to the bowler, they were deemed wide nevertheless. Arshdeep flitted between the disheartened and the resigned - at one stage, a wry, helpless smile flitted across his face - while in the dressing room, head coach Gautam Gambhir was seething. It's anybody's guess what irked him more - Arshdeep's lack of discipline, or the marginal calls that went against his bowler.

Ordeal

By the time Arshdeep was done with the over, he was relieved that the ordeal had ended. Despite that six off the first ball, he conceded only five more runs to the batters, three singles and a two. Normally, that would have translated to an 11-run over, not ideal but definitely a spirited comeback after the first-ball damage. But the seven wides foretold another story, and were primarily responsible for India having to bring a fifth fielder into the 30-yard circle for the last over because they hadn't got through their overs in time.

Arshdeep will get over this remarkable – for all the wrong reasons – night in quick time because if there is one thing he has showcased over the last three-and-a-half years that he has been an international cricketer apart from his immense skills, it is his resilience and mental toughness. In September 2022, he was trolled mercilessly and pilloried as 'anti-national', among other things, when he dropped Pakistan's Asif Ali off Ravi Bishnoi's bowling in a Super Four clash of the T20 Asia Cup in Dubai. Arshdeep himself bowled the final over and couldn't defend the seven runs he had to play with. The dropped catch became a massive talking point on the social media court of (in?)justice and could so easily have broken the young man, but

As Arshdeep played more and more, he topped up his skills but more importantly, he grew in stature and confidence and swing was his ally with the new ball

Arshdeep laughed it away, using the barbs and the criticism to toughen himself up.

With support from his close-knit family and his teammates who threw their weight behind him unconditionally, Arshdeep emerged stronger and better, quickly establishing himself as the No. 1 pace bowler once India decided to rotate out Bumrah, depending on which white-ball format held pre-eminence at that time. As he played more and more, Arshdeep topped up his skills but more importantly, he grew visibly in stature and confidence. If swing was his ally in the PowerPlay with the new ball, he became adept at bowling at the death too, bringing his immense variations into play. Primary among them are a mean, made-to-order yorker that homes in on batters' toes, and a variety of slower deliveries that he mastered through hours of hard yards at practice.

Within no time, he became the go-to man for first Rohit, and then Suryakumar when the latter took over as captain in July last year. If Arshdeep didn't play sometimes, it had less to do with his abilities and more to do with conditions. Take the T20 Asia Cup in Dubai in September, for instance. Because Hardik Pandya and Shivam Dube were both available and because India wanted to field wrist-spinners Varun Chakaravarthy and Kuldeep Yadav, Arshdeep wasn't a starter in all but two matches, against Oman and Sri Lanka in the league phase and the Super Fours respectively, by which time India had already secured progress to the next stage and therefore could rest Bumrah.

Milestone

In Abu Dhabi against Oman, Arshdeep ended a seven-and-half-month wait for his 100th T20I wicket, becoming the first Indian to achieve that milestone when he had Vinayak Shukla caught at deep mid-wicket. It was a wonderful achievement because Arshdeep was only in his 64th outing, and he was still just three and a quarter years young at the highest level. When Bumrah breached the 100-wicket mark in Cuttack with the wicket of Dewald Brevis, Arshdeep might as well have held a placard: "Welcome to the club, I was beginning to feel lonely."

One can picture Arshdeep saying that. A balanced individual with a wonderful if wry sense of humour, he sees the positive in most things. Like most good men, he can seldom be kept down. As India head into the final straight of preparations ahead of the defence of their T20 World Cup crown in February-March, Arshdeep will be keen to bounce back from the Thursday mauling and re-establish himself as the leader of the pack, Bumrah or no Bumrah.

In this series against South Africa, possibly because of the prevalence of dew, India have desisted from fielding both Varun and Kuldeep in the same XI, a tack they might replicate at the World Cup when too the dew will not be inconsiderable. If that is the case, Arshdeep will be expected to deliver early breakthroughs and then come back and hold his own towards the end overs, where he has proved himself to be extremely competent. Alongside Bumrah, he forms a lethal combination – Thursday's loss was India's first defeat when the two quicks have played a 20-over game together – in what is a partnership of equals even though Bumrah is clearly the more acknowledged and celebrated of the pair.

Arshdeep has a long memory and uses that to good effect. He doesn't harp on his failures so much as use them as stepping stones, as learning experiences that help him get better and more effective as a T20 bowler. He is aware, as much as anyone else, that the odds are stacked against the bowlers in a format that encourages unfettered stroke-making and where intrepid batters, armed with new tricks and flashy shots, are stretching the limited almost every single day. Where others might see an obstacle, though, Arshdeep perceives an opportunity. He has enough faith in his skills to comprehend that when there is the slightest hint of help in the form of swing, he will make an impact with the new ball. And he knows that at the death, when batters come after him, he has the resources to beat them at their own game.

Matches like New Chandigarh will happen in what is essentially a format of very small margins. A couple of inches closer to the batter, and Arshdeep would have gotten away with maybe just a wide or two. Even when the wides kept stacking up, Arshdeep showed character by sticking to the plan instead of bowling straighter and being picked off for boundaries in trying to close out the over. That speaks to an individual who isn't fickle, who knows that the problem is not in the planning but in the execution. Mullanpur will remain a one-off, but it's a one-off from which Arshdeep will pick up valuable insights as he targets more success - against the Proteas, against New Zealand next month and then at the World Cup.

THE GIST

- Within no time, he became the go-to man for first Rohit, and then Suryakumar when the latter took over as captain in July last year. If Arshdeep didn't play sometimes, it had less to do with his abilities and more to do with conditions
- Alongside Bumrah, he forms a lethal combination — Thursday's loss was India's first defeat when the two quicks have played a 20-over game together
- Arshdeep has a long memory and uses that to good effect. He doesn't harp on his failures so much as use them as stepping stones, as learning experiences that help him get better and more effective as a T20 bowler

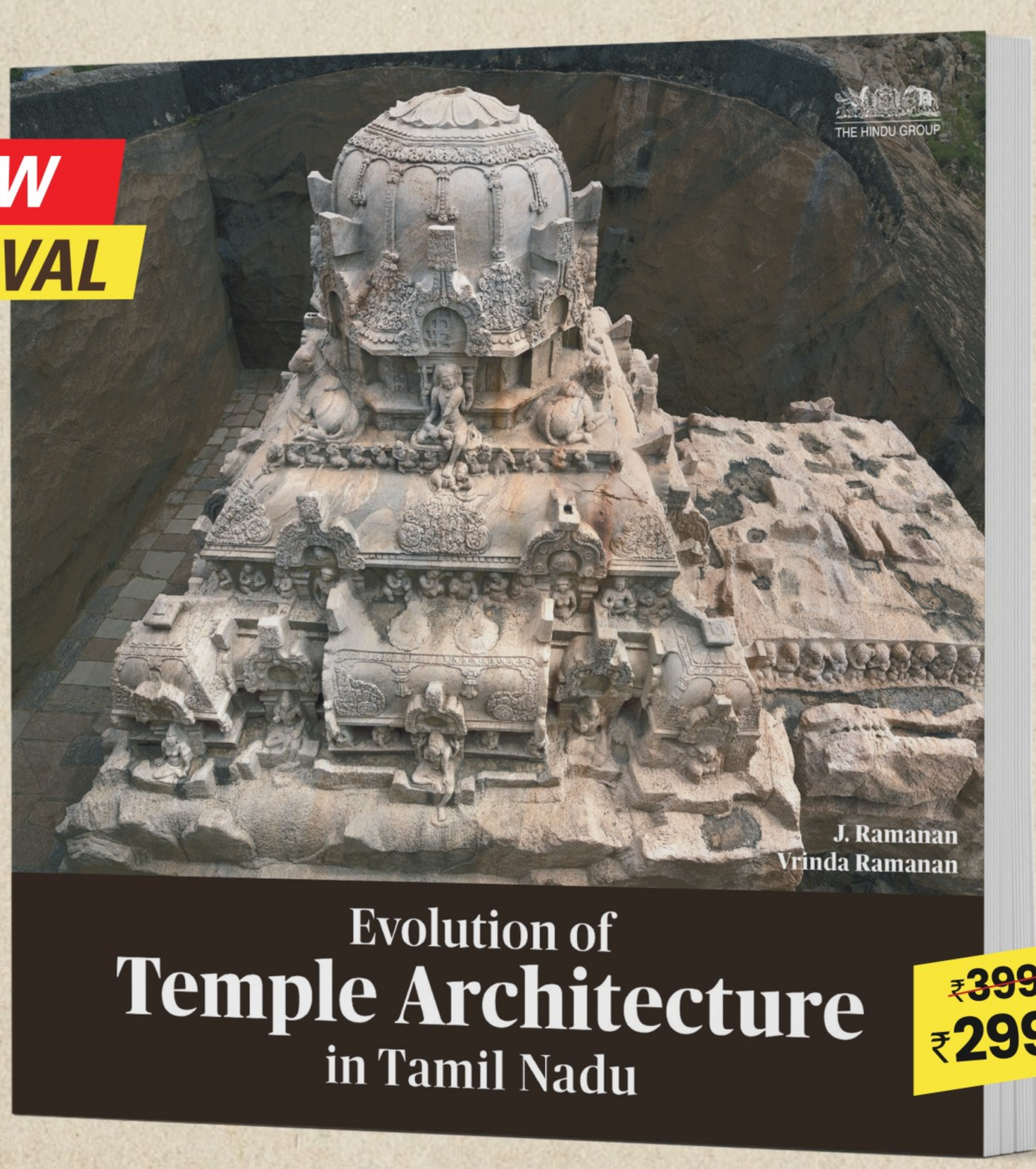
THE HINDU GROUP

A SPECIAL PUBLICATION FROM THE HINDU GROUP

Evolution of
Temple Architecture
in Tamil Nadu

When we marvel at the temples of South India, this coffee table book **'Evolution of Temple Architecture in Tamil Nadu',** gently guides us through their story - tracing the birth, growth and transformation of this timeless art form. Tracing its modest origins from the times of the cave dwellers to its artistic and colossal rise in the hands of the Mauryas, the Chalukyas, the Pallavas, Pandyas and Cholas, this exhaustive volume also explains the various facets of temple architecture with the help of 250 vivid images by J. Ramanan and over 75 illustrations.

NEW ARRIVAL

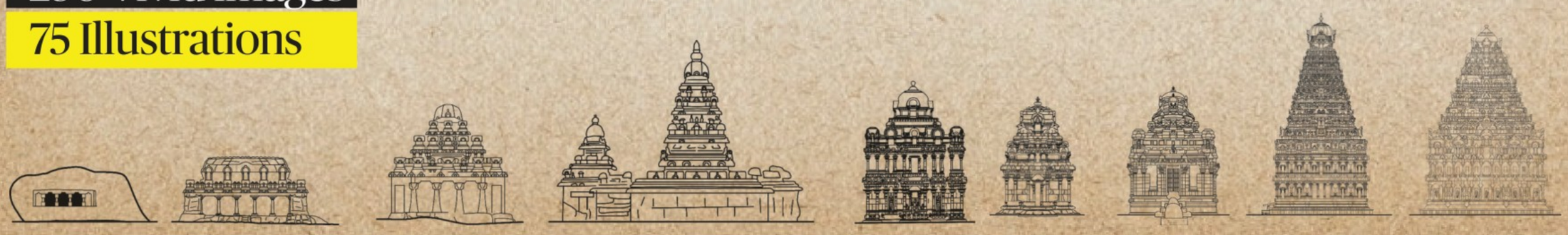


LAUNCH OFFER

~~₹3999~~
₹2999

*Shipping chareges extre | Terms and conditions apply

250 Vivid images
75 Illustrations



PRE-BOOK YOUR COPY ONLINE

For bulk booking and enquiries, contact us at bookstore@thehindu.co.in or 1800 102 1878
scan QR code or visit newsth.live/THBookStore

Will these flyovers be thrown open to public at least in 2026?

A Bengalurean's wishlist for the coming year would definitely feature completion of the much-delayed Ejipura flyover and the structure on Doddaballapur Road, Yelahanka

Chetan B.C.
K.V. Aditya Bharadwaj
BENGALURU

The opening of the Hosakerehalli flyover on the Outer Ring Road (ORR) seems like an achievement of the city in 2025. Like previous years, a Bengalurean's wishlist for 2026 would definitely feature completion of the much-delayed Ejipura flyover and the one on Doddaballapur Road, Yelahanka.

A tale of two projects: While the much delayed Ejipura flyover has sparked a host of jokes, memes, and chatter, resulting in continuous monitoring of the project, the flyover on Doddaballapur Road, Yelahanka, is less talked about. SUDHAKARA JAIN, ALLEN EGENUSE J.

Work in progress

Ejipura flyover
- **Flyover length:** 2.38 km from Kendriya Sadan junction to Ejipura junction
- **Estimated cost:** Earlier ₹207 crore, escalated to ₹307 crore
- **Work commenced:** 2017
- Work was expected to be completed by 2020

Multiple deadlines missed
- **Reason:** First contractor failed to deliver and land acquisition issues
- **Work restarted:** December 2023
- **Revised deadline:** June 2026

Yelahanka flyover
- **Flyover length:** 1.8 km from Yelahanka Police Station to BWSSB junction, Doddaballapur Road
- **Estimated cost:** ₹162 crore
- **Work commenced:** 2022
- Work expected to be completed in 18 months

Multiple deadlines missed
- **Reason:** Land acquisition issues, work being carried out only during night time
- **Revised deadline:** May, 2026.

Ejipura flyover

The 2.38-km Ejipura flyover, planned to decongest the Intermediate Ring Road in Koramangala, stuck since 2019, finally picked up pace in 2025, with segment launching and span installation showing steady progress between June and December. However, the civic body is yet to clear the project's major and perennial hurdle: land acquisition.

On the ground, segment launching works are currently in full swing between Pier 8 and 20, which will continue until mid-January, according to engineers present at the site. Further, construction of ramps near the Ejipura junction is under way, causing major traffic disruption during peak hours.

On the other hand, the project requires the acquisition of three land parcels, of which two are government land.

The major hurdle has been the St. John's Medical College and Hospital land, the case for which is currently before the court. Officials say the process will pick up in January, but the deadline appears far from reality owing to the complications involved.

"St. John's Medical College and Hospital land is necessary because we need a portal beam at that particular point as per our design diagrams. We have

a ramp planned at that location," an engineer overseeing the project told *The Hindu*.

According to the official, the deadline may be pushed further if the case settlement and acquisition are delayed. However, Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) sources are optimistic about completing the acquisition process by the end of January.

Meanwhile, M. Maheshwar Rao, Chief Commissioner, GBA, has set June 2026 as the deadline to complete the project, which appears too optimistic at this point.

However, if everything goes as planned, segment launching and span installation will be completed by March, while ramp construction may continue until May. It may take another month to complete minor works.

The Ejipura junction is a gateway to eastern Bengaluru for residents of south and southeast Bengaluru.

Madhav Punyaslok, a Koramangala resident who uses the IRR to reach Indiranagar every day, said the junction takes at least six to 10 minutes to cross, especially for those coming from Sony Signal.

The site engineer told *The Hindu* that ramp construction at Ejipura junction will be completed by the end of January.

Yelahanka flyover

While the much delayed Ejipura flyover has sparked a host of jokes, memes and chatter, resulting in continuous monitoring of the project, the flyover on Doddaballapura Road, Yelahanka, is less talked about.

The work on the short 1.8-km long flyover on Doddaballapur Road between Yelahanka police station and BWSSB junction began in 2022, with a deadline of 18 months for work to be completed. But the work is dragging on even now.

In June, 2025, the GBA Chief Commissioner, then heading the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), inspected ongoing works and set a new deadline of December, 2025, for works to be completed. However, it is nowhere near completion.

While most of the pillars have been erected, work is on to install the girders in place.

Construction of the ramp has begun at Sandeep Unnikrishnan Road and girders are yet to be placed at the other end. Sources in GBA said the new deadline for the project is May 2026.

The flyover is designed to provide a signal-free commute on Doddaballapur Road. But residents of the area say the prolonged construction has created more problems than the traffic signals and even question the need for this flyover.

"We lose nearly an hour in the morning and evening combined. Weekends are even worse. Actually, we do not understand why this flyover is needed at all," said Varadaraj M., a resident of the area.

A senior civic official said that work on the flyover was inordinately delayed as it was being carried out only during the night. "This is a State highway and there is no service road. So we cannot divert traffic.

There were some hurdles in land acquisition and shifting utilities, which have been cleared now," the official said.

(This is the first of a multi-part series)

Congress to receive applications for GBA elections from today

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Deputy Chief Minister and Bengaluru Development Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Sunday said the Congress will commence receiving applications from interested candidates for the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) elections from Monday.

"Although the reservation roster hasn't been finalised yet, applications are being invited to see who are all interested to contest in 369 wards," Mr. Shivakumar told the media at Karnataka Bhavan in New Delhi on Sunday.

The announcement follows a discussion during the last Cabinet meeting. *The Hindu* reported that the Cabinet discussed civic elections and tentatively agreed upon suggesting April or May 2026, to the Election Commission to hold polls.

"After discussions with Ministers, it has been decided that the money collected along with these applications will be added to party fund. The fee has been fixed at ₹50,000 for the general category and ₹25,000 for women and candidates from Scheduled Castes and Tribes. An option to apply online has also been provided," Mr. Shivakumar said.

However, a State government committee to finalise the reservation roster is yet to finish the process. The government has committed to notifying the reservation by December 15. After the formal inauguration of the GBA on September 2, Mr. Shivakumar had announced that the delimitation committee, headed by the GBA Chief Commissioner, would complete the delimitation and reservation process by November 30. However, due to various reasons, the government pushed the deadline and is expected to finish reservations by December 15.

Santa Clauses are coming to town

Bikers dressed as Santa Claus take part in a rally themed 'Santa Drive and Ride' at Residency Road on Sunday. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

Directors of private firm booked for ₹17.5-crore real estate fraud

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Bengaluru police have booked three people, including two directors of a private company and a real estate agent, for allegedly cheating a 61-year-old man of ₹17.5 crore in a real estate transaction.

The accused have been identified as Sneha Rakesh and Rajath Venkatesh, directors of Akarmaxs Tech Pvt. Ltd., and the agent Robin Francis. The case pertains to a property measuring about 16,990 sq. ft. in Banashankari 2nd Stage in south Bengaluru.

According to the FIR, the complainant sold the property to the directors through Francis and executed a registered sale deed on November 23, 2022, at the Shantinagar sub-registrar's office, reflecting a transaction value of ₹17.5 crore.

The accused reportedly issued four cheques towards payment of the sale consideration. However, all cheques bounced owing to discrepancies in signatures when the complainant presented them for encashment. Despite repeated follow-ups, the accused allegedly failed to make the payment and continued to give assurances, citing various reasons.

The complainant further alleged that the accused benefited from the property while deliberately withholding the agreed amount. When he demanded payment, the accused allegedly resorted to threats, said the FIR.

Krishna Byre Gowda comes down heavily on metro officials again

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda once again came down heavily on officials of the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) and contractors over the slow pace of work on the Blue Line (airport corridor), saying prolonged delays have been causing avoidable hardship to the public.

Morning inspection

Mr. Gowda on Sunday conducted an early-morning inspection of the Phase 2B stretch from Nagawara to Bagalur Cross, covering junctions including Veerannapalya, Hebbal, Esteem Mall Junction, Allalasandra, Jakkur Airdrome, Byatarayanapura, and Kodigehalli.

The inspection began around 7 a.m. and Bangalore North Corporation Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar, metro engineers, and officials from BWSSB, Bescom, and the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) were present.

Noting the pace of construction, the Minister questioned officials over pillars that have remained incomplete for nearly two years at several locations. "If it takes two years to build a single pillar, how can you suddenly claim the work will be completed in two months? Can you do magic?" he said, pulling up the metro contractor and engineers on the spot.

He criticised officials for blocking work at some locations while proceeding elsewhere, asking why the public should suffer owing to poor planning and coordination.

He also raised concerns over footpaths and service roads being filled with construction debris, which has made movement difficult for pedestrians and motorists alike.

He directed the authorities to immediately clear encroachments and dispose of metro waste to restore public access.

Cantonment Railway Colony: With heritage site tag withdrawn, activists feel 368 trees could be axed

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

With the State government withdrawing its earlier order to bestow biodiversity heritage site tag to the 8.61-acre Cantonment Railway Colony in Bengaluru, environmental activists fear that 368 trees in the colony could face the axe.

Activists said earthmovers were brought on Sunday to expedite the construction work in the colony which is home to 50 different species of trees, some of which are more than 70 years old.

Mahesh Basapur of Parisarakkagi Naavu said that on Sunday morning when the activists visited the colony, they spotted earthmovers and other equipment which, he said, was to commence construction activity.

The Cantonment Railway Colony, declared a heritage site three months ago, is now under risk after the State government revoked its notification. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

He said that the work is being expedited by a private realty firm with plans to construct a business park on the premises.

"It is very unfortunate the State government has withdrawn its own notification on September 10 which declared the colony a Biodiversity Heritage Site. We have questioned the government why it has reversed its own decision within three months. However, we have not received any reply from them," Mr. Basapur said.

He added that no tree has been felled in the colony and that those who were present on the site promised the activists that there were no such plans to cut down trees.

"They promised us that no trees will be felled, but we are scared that they might do something in the night and we are appealing to the government to protect this lung space," he added.

On December 6, a notification was issued that an earlier notification issued on September 10 was being withdrawn. "The Government Notification No.: APG 187 ENV 2025, dated: 10.09.2025, declaring an 8.61 acre green area with 371 trees adjacent to the Railway Cantonment Station, Bengauru as a Biodiversity Heritage Site under the powers conferred under Section 37 of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002, is hereby withdrawn with immediate effect," stated the December 6 notification.

On September 10, Environment Minister Eshwar Khandre announced that the Cantonment Railway Colony area, containing 371 trees from 50 different species, has been declared a biodiversity heritage site.

"The area also carries historic significance, as Mahatma Gandhi had interacted with freedom fighters here in 1920. The trees play a vital role in reducing carbon dioxide levels, curbing air and noise pollution, and preserving the city's green cover," he had said then.

It can be recalled that on April 25, the erstwhile Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike issued a notice announcing that the Rail Land Development Authority (RLDA) had applied to remove 368 trees in the area for commercial activity.

Following the public notice, the proposal received strong opposition from environmentalists, tree lovers, and the public.

Bengaluru North Corporation removes 1,350 tonnes of waste

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Bengaluru North City Corporation conducted a cleanliness drive on Sunday, clearing a total of 1,350 tonnes of waste across its jurisdiction.

The drive covered stretches from Nagawara junction to Hebbal junction along the Outer Ring Road and extended to Allalasandra. The drive, held from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m., was led by Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar and was reviewed by Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda.

During the drive, around 40 illegal shop structures were also dismantled with instructions issued to prevent future encroachments.

Over the past week, over 150 pourakarmikas were deployed daily, supported by 17 tractors, and eight tippers and compactors, leading to the removal of approximately 1,200 tonnes of construction debris and other waste from the city's main roads.

A cleanliness drive cleared 150 tonnes of waste in one of the wards within Dasarahalli, including 130 tonnes of construction debris, while volunteers from Youth for Parivarthana helped in cleaning black spots and beautifying an 80-metre-footpath, he said.

‘Publication retractions from India have skyrocketed since 2022’

The biggest concern is the use of gen AI to manufacture fake data, papers and reviews; before AI software became available, paraphrasing applications were employed to avoid detection, consequently, these papers contain ludicrous artefacts; many were submitted, reviewed by software and accepted without anyone reading them at all

Divya Gandhi

Achal Agrawal founded the India Research Watch (IRW) after observing grave academic misconduct in India. Dr. Agrawal, now a freelance data scientist in Raipur, told scientific journal *Nature* how shocked he was when a student spoke casually of using software to publish his work. This amounts to plagiarism, Dr. Agrawal said, but the student insisted his work had passed the university’s plagiarism checks. Now a part of *Nature*’s 10 - a list of people “who shaped science in 2025” compiled by the journal - Dr. Agrawal spoke to*The Hindu* about why he decided to quit his university job and devote his time to driving the discourse on research misconduct in India.

India ranks third, after China and the U.S., for publication retraction numbers. Is academic misconduct, such as plagiarism, not taken seriously in Indian academia?

India actually ranks second since 2022. The number of retractions from India has skyrocketed since 2022. Even the percentage of articles getting retracted has seen a sharp increase. It’s true that even the discovered cases of misconduct are not taken seriously. We know of cases with more than 30 retractions due to manipulation being felicitated and awarded in a premier Indian Institute.

University Grants Commission (UGC) guidelines stipulate very minimal penalty even if someone is found having plagiarised 60% of the content. Other forms of misconduct like data manipulation, are not even mentioned in the UGC guidelines. Also, most countries have central ‘Research Integrity Offices’ that investigate and follow up on cases of misconduct. In India, such an office does not exist, and the investigations are left to the institutes, which have a vested interest in letting their researchers continue to use shortcuts.

In what ways is software used unethically to assist published work?

The biggest concern right now is the use of gen AI to generate fake data, papers and reviews. Before gen AI, a lot of people also used paraphrasing software to avoid getting caught for plagiarism. They would take existing papers, pass it through software, and then check if the plagiarism percentage was lower than the threshold. A lot of papers like that were then submitted, reviewed and accepted without anyone reading them at all. They contain hilarious artefacts of paraphrasing: “big data” becomes “colossal information” and “artificial intelligence becomes counterfeit consciousness”, for instance. A lot of image manipulation also happens using popular image editing software, but there are increasingly sophisticated tools to detect image manipulation.

Achal Agrawal, founder of India Research Watch. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Why did you feel it was necessary to quit your university job to catalyse this discourse?

It is difficult to do this work while working at a university, as it creates tonnes of conflicts of interest as well as pressures from the university itself. But I did not quit the university solely to do this work. I was also volunteering at a government school in Uttarakhand.

However, not being in the university system gave me the freedom to do this work without any conflict of interest or institutional pressures. I was lucky to be able to do a few freelancing projects too, as a data scientist, to help me with finances.

> NIRF has to be more transparent. For example, we don’t know which college was given how much penalty this year, making it imperceptible, and thus ineffective
>
> **ACHAL AGARWAL**
> INDIA RESEARCH WATCH

How easy is it to prove misconduct?

Most of the cases being caught right now are the really lazy researchers who do a shabby job at hiding the unethical artefacts in their work. The clever ones are way more difficult to prove, especially since it needs cooperation and coordination of several bodies in some cases.

On average, a retraction happens two years after publishing, showing how rigorous the process for a retraction is. A lot of problematic papers that are flagged by sleuths are still not retracted even after clear proof of issues with the paper. Plagiarism detection software, as well as gen AI detection software are not reliable and can’t be considered proof. Also, a lot of paraphrasing escapes detection.

India’s National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) now pulls up institutions if several papers published by their researchers have been retracted. What more needs to be done?

Penalty for retractions is a necessary step to control this problem urgently. However, it is only treating the symptoms and ignoring the root cause, which in this case are the flawed metrics in NIRF itself, which have given rise to excessive focus on publication statistics. There is an urgent need to review NIRF to make it much more robust and transparent.

For example, we don’t know which college was given how much penalty this year, making the penalty imperceptible, and thus ineffective. Also, because of the excessive focus on research, education has really taken a backseat in higher education. Many professors cut corners while teaching to devote more time to research, as it is what is measured and rewarded.

Tell us more about the portal you have created where whistleblowers can report breaches anonymously.

A lot of people are only willing to talk about issues anonymously as they, legitimately, fear retribution for whistle-blowing. So we provide this feature on our portal where one is anonymous by design. The person has the option of providing an anonymous email in case they wish to follow up. We receive about 10 tips a day, but many of them are quite generic in nature asking to look at a certain profile, or are clearly driven by vendetta based on the language of complaint. Certain complaints are genuine, which we follow up and sometimes post about through our handle. However, a ‘Research Integrity Office’ will be much better placed in dealing with these complaints as they will have the authority to actually pursue and do something about it.

You now face a lawsuit by a private university...

Yes, a civil defamation case has been filed against IRW and is pending. Interim applications were disposed of on December 8 and a copy of the order is now awaited.

THE GIST

The UGC has stipulated only minimal penalties even for 60% plagiarised content. India also has no ‘Research Integrity Office’ to follow up on cases of misconduct. Investigations are left to the institutes, which have an interest in letting researchers continue to use shortcuts

Most cases that come to light are by researchers who did a shabby job of hiding unethical artefacts. Many problematic papers are not retracted even after proof is furnished. Plagiarism and AI detection software are not reliable and cannot be considered proof

Penalties for retractions are a necessary step. However, the root cause is the flawed metrics by NIRF itself, which led to an excessive focus on publication statistics. Because of this skewed focus, education has taken a backseat

BIG SHOT

Nubian ibexes climbing a hill in Israel’s southern Negev desert near Faran. REUTERS

WHAT IS IT?

Lunarcrete: concrete for the moon

Vasudevan Mukunth

Lunarcrete is an umbrella term for ‘concrete made on the moon’. As the US and China race to establish long-term lunar settlements, scientists are looking for a suitable building material to protect people from hazardous radiation and drastic temperature swings.

Lunarcrete is one promising candidate: instead of sand and gravel, it uses lunar regolith, the grey soil that covers the moon, as its main aggregate. One challenge however is the binder: while Portland cement uses lots of water on the earth, water is a precious resource on the moon. So researchers are exploring options that minimise or eliminate the need for water.

One option is to ship some cement (or another binder) from the earth and combine it with regolith using minimal water and curing inside sealed habitats. Another is sulphur lunarcrete, where scientists melt sulphur, mix it with regolith, and let it cool into a solid.

Sulphur can act like cement without water but it softens if it gets too hot. A third idea is to heat regolith with microwaves or concentrated sunlight so the grains partly melt and fuse, creating bricks.

Recently, Louisiana State University researchers led by Arup Bhattacharya simulated a dome-shaped lunar habitat with lunarcrete walls. When they subjected it to temperatures from 120 C to –130 C, they found the walls could preserve the temperature inside at 22 C. Walls made of two layers of lunarcrete with a layer of empty space in between were also found to be excellent insulators.

Edwin “Buzz” Aldrin’s bootprint taken during Apollo 11 shows the fine and powdery texture of lunar regolith. NASA

For feedback and suggestions for ‘Science’, please write to **science@thehindu.co.in** with the subject ‘Daily page’

IIHL

IndusInd International Holdings Ltd
Mauritius

A New Era of Strength,
Trust & Prosperity

IndusInd Bank

IndusInd GENERAL INSURANCE
FORMERLY RELIANCE GENERAL INSURANCE

IndusInd Nippon Life

IndusInd SECURITIES
FORMERLY RELIANCE SECURITIES

Invesco Mutual Fund

IndusInd Capital
FORMERLY RELIANCE CAPITAL

IIHL BANK & TRUST
BAHAMAS

Building an ecosystem beyond banking.
Entering Insurance, Mutual Funds, Brokerage,
and Private Banking sectors to contribute towards
Viksit Bharat.

www.indusindinternational.com

Adfactors 669/25

Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

The growth in India's gems, jewellery exports in November

19.64 In per cent. India's gems and jewellery exports grew 19.64% to $2.5 billion in November compared to the same month last year. The overall exports of gems and jewellery were flat at $18.86 billion during the April-November period. PTI

Persons killed in a shooting attack on Sydney's Bondi Beach

11 Two gunmen shot dead at least 11 people on Sunday during a Jewish holiday celebration at Sydney's Bondi Beach, Australian authorities said, declaring it a terrorist attack. One gunman was fatally shot by police, and the second was arrested. The suspect was in critical condition. AP

Turnout recorded in Telangana's Gram Panchayat elections

85.86 In per cent. Over 85% of eligible voters exercised their franchise in the second phase of the gram panchayat elections in Telangana on Sunday. The elections concluded peacefully, and the counting of votes was underway. PTI

Foreigners still in detention since scam centre crackdown

1,655 Myanmar appealed to the international community to take back hundreds of foreigners who have been detained in a crackdown on scam centres in the Kayin state. While most have been deported, 1,655 are still in detention. PTI

Magnitude of the earthquake in Nepal's Manang district

4.7 A mild earthquake shook the Manang district of Gandaki province in central Nepal. There was no immediate news of damage from the earthquake area. The epicentre of the 4.7 magnitude quake was recorded at Thoche in Manang district at 12.54 pm. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

Follow us facebook.com/thehindu X.com/the_hindu instagram.com/the_hindu

Why are OBC lists in Bengal being scrutinised?

Why have communities, mainly Muslim, been recommended to be excluded from West Bengal's Central list of Other Backward Classes? What has the National Commission for Backward Classes said? Is there a clash between the current stance of the NCBC and the erstwhile NCBC of 2011?

EXPLAINER

Abhinay Lakshman

The story so far:

The National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) has recommended the exclusion of 35 communities, mostly Muslim, from West Bengal's Central list of Other Backward Classes (OBCs). This information was revealed in the winter session of Parliament this year by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, which added that this advice was tendered by the Commission in January this year. This has come just months before West Bengal is set to vote in its next Assembly election in 2026. Moreover, the Supreme Court is in the middle of hearing pleas related to the manner in which certain communities were added to the State's OBC lists. It remains to be seen if the Union government will initiate steps to act on the Commission's recommendation.

Which communities have been excluded?

Officials of the NCBC have told *The Hindu* that the communities recommended by it for exclusion are part of a batch of communities that were added to the Central OBC list of West Bengal in 2014, just ahead of the Lok Sabha elections that year. "These are part of the Muslim communities that were added suspiciously. Maybe one or two of the communities recommended for exclusion are non-Muslim," said Hansraj Gangaram Ahir, under whose chairmanship the recommendation was made.

The batch of communities the NCBC is referring to is a set of 37 communities that were added to West Bengal's Central OBC list in early 2014, based on its own 2011 recommendation. The State Commission for Backward Classes had, in November 2010, studied 46 castes and communities, concluding that they qualify as socially and educationally backward classes who are under-represented in services. These groups were added to the State OBC list.

By 2011, the request from West Bengal to include these communities in the Central OBC list was examined by the erstwhile National Commission for Backward Classes, headed by Justice M. N. Rao. This NCBC recommended that 37 of these communities be included in the Central OBC list. 35 of them were Muslim communities that were thought to have converted from "lower Hindu castes". Most of the members of these communities worked as manual labourers, rickshaw pullers, bidi rollers, barbers, agricultural labourers, tailors, etc. The only non-Muslim groups were the Devanga and Gangot communities.

Why were they included initially?

At the time of recommending the inclusion of these communities in the Central OBC list of West Bengal, the erstwhile NCBC relied wholly on the findings of the State Commission for Backward Classes, based on which the State had also included them in the State OBC lists.

In discussing each of the communities' justification for inclusion, the Commission, at the time, concluded that they were all socially backward in terms of how they were treated in society, educationally backward in terms of school admissions and drop-out rates, and economically backwards in terms of being landless, or working menial jobs, or being stuck to specific caste/community professions. In nearly all of the cases, the commission mentioned their lack of representation in the services. With regard to some of the Muslim communities, the NCBC said that their professions, such as barbers, were historically associated with being performed by "lower castes" and hence, these communities faced discrimination from both Muslims and Hindus in society, which was leading to their social, educational, and economic backwardness. Similarly, the Commission noted in some cases that the communities' Hindu counterparts in other States had already been classified as OBCs or, in some cases, Scheduled Castes (SCs). And in some other cases, the Commission said the communities were treated "like Scheduled Castes" in their new faith of Islam, with evidence of them being asked to hold Namaz separately.

The NCBC's recommendations to include these communities happened in the backdrop of government-commissioned reports such as the Sachar Committee Report of 2006 and the Ranganath Mishra Committee Report of 2007, which had looked at the marginalisation of Muslims in India and the socio-educational and economic status of historically Dalit communities that had converted to Islam or Christianity, respectively.

The Sachar Committee Report had compared the marginalisation of Muslims in India to that of the SC communities, whereas the Ranganath Mishra Committee had studied them as Dalit Muslims and Dalit Christians, concluding that Dalit communities continued to face a caste barrier post conversion of faith, advocating de-linking the SC classification from a religion test.

Why are they now being excluded?

Now, nearly 15 years after the NCBC made these recommendations, the Commission, under the chairmanship of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Hansraj Gangaram Ahir, has changed its reasoning and asked that they be removed from the Central OBC list. This recommendation is a culmination of the efforts Mr. Ahir has made since he took charge of the Commission in 2022.

In February 2023, before Mr. Ahir had a Vice-Chair or any Members on his Commission, the NCBC undertook a study visit to West Bengal and began scrutinising the OBC list. Weeks after this study visit, Mr. Ahir told a press conference in New Delhi that there was "something wrong" with the State's OBC lists, raising suspicion over the "high number of Muslim communities" in them. That year, the NCBC had also begun taking note of the Muslim communities in the OBC list of Karnataka.

This information was soon used by the BJP in its political rhetoric, accusing the Opposition of Muslim-appeasement at the cost of other communities in the run-up to the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. By May 2024, the Calcutta High Court had struck down the inclusion of a large number of communities from the OBC lists, largely Muslim. In that judgment, the High Court had concluded that religion had been the "sole criterion for declaring these communities as OBC". It had found the "selection of 77 classes of Muslims as backwards an affront to the Muslim community as a whole". The High Court judgment had impacted five lakh OBC certificates issued in the State since 2010.

But with the Supreme Court also hearing the matter, it stayed the High Court's order. However, the NCBC proceeded with its scrutiny of the State's Central OBC list, arguing that many of the State OBC communities found suspicious were common with a batch of communities added to the Central list in 2014. By January 2025, the NCBC, led by Mr. Ahir, recommended that 35 of the 37 communities added in 2014 be excluded from the Central OBC list of West Bengal. In December this year, he finished his tenure as NCBC Chair.

How had the erstwhile NCBC responded?

The issue now raised by the NCBC – of whether certain OBC classifications were made based on religion over backwardness – had been placed before the erstwhile Commission in 2011 as well. At the time of recommending the inclusion in 2011, the NCBC had first considered objections that this was a political request intended to benefit only Muslims.

In the first few pages of its advice, the Commission dismissed these objections raised by advocate Kartik Chandra Kapas, also then Eastern Zone Chairman of the National Union for Backward Classes, SC, ST, and Minorities. It had said at the time that these allegations were being made for publicity, adding, "We do not find any political angle in the action of the State government."

The NCBC had further made it a point to stress that these communities had been found socially and educationally backwards with very little representation in the services by the State Commission, and that this conclusion had been accepted by the State government as well. It had thus concluded that the NCBC "cannot take up an independent survey" to determine communities' backwardness because such an inquiry had already been conducted.

In the advice it tendered to the Central government at the time, the NCBC relied on the conclusions of the State Commission for Backward Classes. While in the case of the Devanga and Gangot communities, the NCBC advice mentioned their numbers in the population, school drop-out rates, income, etc., for most of the other communities, its advice referred to their backwardness without providing data for these socio-economic indicators.

While hearing this matter in December 2024, the Supreme Court of India had asked the State government for quantifiable data to show these communities' backwardness, in terms of lack of representation in public employment, and on social and economic backwardness.

What next?

While the NCBC recommendation has been sent to the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, no decision appears to have been taken by the Union government on whether to move ahead with amending the OBC lists.

Sources have told *The Hindu* that the NCBC, under the chairmanship of Mr. Ahir, has sent advice on inclusion and exclusion in the OBC lists of eight other States to the Ministry.

But hereon, unlike in 2014, the procedure now requires that any changes to Central OBC lists be brought through Parliament for notification by the President of India.

This is owing to the Constitution (102nd) Amendment Act, brought in by the first Narendra Modi-led government in 2018, which gave constitutional status to the NCBC and specified the role of Parliament and the President in identifying socially and educationally backward classes. In 2014, the law on identifying OBCs gave the executive power to notify lists based on the NCBC's recommendation.

Changing lists: Hansraj Gangaram Ahir in 2018. FILE PHOTO

THE GIST

- The National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) has recommended the exclusion of 35 communities, mostly Muslim, from West Bengal's Central list of Other Backward Classes (OBCs).
- Officials of the NCBC have told *The Hindu* that the communities recommended by it for exclusion are part of a batch of communities that were added to the Central OBC list of West Bengal in 2014, just ahead of the Lok Sabha elections that year.
- While the NCBC recommendation has been sent to the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, no decision appears to have been taken by the Union government on whether to move ahead with amending the OBC lists.

Govt. yet to procure sanitary pads under Shuchi scheme

With four months left for the academic year to end, tenders to procure these sanitary napkins are still under way; the scheme, which was discontinued in 2020 during the pandemic, was resumed in 2024, following a High Court order

Jayanth R.
BENGALURU

There are only four months left for the completion of the academic year 2025-26. But the State government is yet to supply Shuchi kits (sanitary napkin kits) to adolescent girls aged 10 to 18 in government and aided schools, colleges and hostels under the menstrual hygiene programme, Shuchi. Tenders to procure these sanitary napkins are still under way.

The scheme, that was discontinued in 2020 during the pandemic, was resumed in January 2024, following a High Court order. Sanitary napkins were procured in 2024-25 without tenders after availing an exemption under Section 4G of the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurements (KTPP) Act, 1999.

However, this year, the government has called tenders for procurement leading to a delay.

Responding to a question raised by Congress MLC Madhu G. Madegowda in the ongoing legislature session, Minister for Health and Family Welfare

Under Shuchi scheme, the government distributes 12 Shuchi Kits, each with 10 sanitary napkins, per year for a student. FILE PHOTO

The government has identified 19,64,507 beneficiaries for 2025-26

Dinesh Gundu Rao said that the Cabinet had approved the distribution of sanitary pads under the Shuchi programme for the year 2025-26, and a tender had been called by Karnataka State Medical Supplies Corporation Limited (KSMSCL) for the procurement process.

Under the Shuchi scheme, the State government distributes 12 Shuchi Kits, each with 10 sanitary napkins, per year per student. The State government has identified 19,64,507 beneficiaries for the year 2025-26, and the scheme is expected to cost ₹71.83 crore this year.

Students struggle

Meanwhile, the Department provided sanitary pads for schools and colleges in July and August, 2025, from the pending stock of the procurement from the previous academic year, which is now over in most institutions, forcing students to buy sanitary napkins out of their own pockets.

"This year I only got sanitary pads twice in college. When I inquired recently, the college staff told me that the pads were out of stock. So, I am buying pads from my own money. The government should earnestly implement the schemes they announce," said Ranjitha, a student from Bengaluru.

All India Democratic Students' Organisation (AIDSO) has criticised the inordinate delay in providing sanitary napkins to students. "This negligence highlights the contradictory attitude of the governments. On the one hand, the Union government champions slogans like *Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao*, but fails to deliver essential support. On the other hand, the State government offers guarantee schemes, while simultaneously withdrawing basic necessities. We strongly condemn this anti-student attitude of the government," said Apoorva C.M., vice-president, AIDSO, Karnataka.

Beneficiaries identified under Shuchi programe

Department	Number of beneficiaries
School Education	13,50,925
Pre-University Education	3,83,686
Social Welfare	46,476
Backward Classes Welfare Department	41,852
KREIS	1,25,055
Scheduled Tribes Welfare Department	7,063
Minority Welfare	9,450
Total	19,64,507

Turn to NGOs

With the State government not supplying sanitary pads to schools and colleges, many institutions have turned to non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to fill the gaps.

A headmaster of a government school in Laggere, Bengaluru, said that their school had over 150 adolescent girls, and the Shuchi kits provided by the Department of Health and Family Welfare in July were over. "A local donor purchased enough sanitary pads for all the girls in our school for a month. We have approached another NGO for pads next month," he said.

Late-night waste dumping under the scanner as BSWML deploys marshals

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In an effort to eliminate black spots, Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML) has intensified its crackdown on littering by regularly deploying marshals for night patrols across the city. As part of a strategic plan, marshals are now intercepting offenders and imposing spot fines during night time, according to a BSWML source.

Karee Gowda, Chief Executive Officer, BSWML, told *The Hindu* that marshals are being deployed regularly between 8 p.m. and 11 p.m. "We are collecting nearly ₹3 lakh to ₹5 lakh in fines every day, as we strictly enforce the law by cracking down on littering," he said.

Another BSWML source explained that in areas where the black spot problem persists, marshals extend their duty by an additional hour to catch more offenders.

However, residents in several areas blame BSWML for failing to collect waste on time. Earlier, *The Hindu* reported on the irregular movement of waste collection vehicles in the Ejipura area. The problem still persists in Ejipura, with black spots visible in almost every cross. A similar situation exists in Suddaguntepalya and Tavarekere in south Bengaluru, areas with a large student population.

Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited is also acting on complaints against habitual littering. AFP

Dheeman Garg, a resident of 22nd Cross, Ejipura, lamented that garbage piles up near his house every week owing to the irregular timing of waste collection vehicles.

"There is no fixed timing here. Sometimes they come around 11.30 a.m. and at other times around 7.30 a.m. I leave home around 9 a.m. and return in the evening; when am I supposed to dispose of my garbage?" Mr. Garg said. "This is not just a problem on 22nd Cross, but across Ejipura. Every lane in this area greets people with garbage, and black spots extend for over 50 metres," he added. He contended that irregular waste collection inevitably forces people to dispose of garbage in public spaces.

When asked about this, Mr. Gowda reaffirmed that immediate action would be taken against irregular garbage collection, and urged residents to share details whenever such issues arise.

Apart from this, BSWML is also acting on complaints against habitual littering. Recently, a video showing a Ward 29 resident, identified as Sandeep, dumping three large bags of garbage from his car went viral, drawing the attention of BSWML. The agency traced him and imposed a fine of ₹5,000.

Four held for posing as police and robbing 25-year-old at his house

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Bengaluru police have arrested four persons for allegedly masquerading as police officers and robbing a 25-year-old resident of Vidyaranyapura in the north-eastern part of Bengaluru on December 7. The accused have been identified as Mallikarjun.S. alias Malli, 27, Promod V., 30, and Vinay H.T., 36, who posed as police officers, and Hruthvik P., 24, who assisted the trio, police said.

According to the First Information Report (FIR), Mallikarjun, dressed in a police sub-inspector's uniform, along with Promod and Vinay, who impersonated police officers in plainclothes, barged into the victim's house in Narasipura Layout, Vidyaranyapura, around 11.30 p.m. on December 7.

Mallikarjun allegedly accused the victim of peddling drugs and told him that his house would be searched. The fake officers searched the house and assaulted the victim with lathis and iron rods before transferring ₹87,000 from his bank account and taking custody of ₹55,000 in cash.

"They accused me of earning the seized money by selling drugs and took it away. They threatened to book a drugs case against me if I reported the incident to anyone," the victim told the police, adding that he filed a complaint after growing suspicious about the 'policemen'.

Sajeeth V., Deputy Commissioner of Police (North-east), formed a special team to trace the suspects after an FIR was registered at the Vidyaranyapura police station under BNS Section 311, which deals with robbery. The team verified that the men were imposters, reviewed CCTV footage in the vicinity, and followed technical leads, eventually arresting all four accused.

Investigations revealed that the prime suspect, Mallikarjun, was once a police aspirant who failed the competitive examination. Since then, he had been posing as a police officer in his village near Siraguppa in Ballari district.

Mr. Sajeeth said Mallikarjun, who lives in Mathikere, got a police uniform stitched in Kamakshipalya after failing the exam and purchased all the accessories worn by police personnel. He also got a photoshoot done in the uniform and posed as a police officer in his village.

"He met another accused, Hruthvik, in Kamakshipalya, who tipped him off about the victim. Mallikarjun then roped in his two friends and hatched a robbery plan," he said.

Timings
BENGALURU

MONDAY, DEC. 15		
RISE	06:33	SET 17:56
RISE	02:31	SET 14:22
TUESDAY, DEC. 16		
RISE	06:34	SET 17:56
RISE	03:19	SET 15:01
WEDNESDAY, DEC. 17		
RISE	06:35	SET 17:57
RISE	04:08	SET 15:44

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	29	20
Mysuru	29	17
Bengaluru	29	15

Bengaluru Today
28ºC The weather will be dry. Day will be comfortable. Night will be very cool and hazy.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
28ºC Morning will be very cool with mist and haze. Day will be comfortable. Night also will be very cool. Dry weather to occur.

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2025
All rights reserved.

THE HINDU
DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the veracity of an advertisement before responding to any published in this newspaper. THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, does not vouch for the authenticity of any advertisement or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products and/or services. In no event can the Owner, Publisher, Printer, Editor, Director/s, Employees of this newspaper/company be held responsible/liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

Jawaharlal Nehru Aluminium Research Development and Design Centre
(An Autonomous Body under Ministry of Mines, Govt. of India)
Opp.Wadi Police Station, Amravati Road,Wadi Nagpur-440023
www.jnarddc.gov.in : 07104-220701

Vacancy for DIRECTOR, JNARDDC Nagpur
Last date of receipt of application : 02.02.2026

Advt. No. 55/2025 **Date:15.12.2025**

Ministry of Mines, Govt. of India invites applications from Indian nationals for the post of **Director, JNARDDC, Nagpur** an autonomous body of Ministry of Mines engaged in research in the field of non-ferrous metals, critical minerals and recycling sector.

Qualification Criteria :

A- Essential :
1st Class BE/ME in Metallurgical / Chemical Engineering of a recognized university.

B- Experience :
At least 20 years of experience out of which 10 years should be in a leadership role in a research / academic institution / organization or Non-ferrous sector/ recycling sector / critical minerals. The applicant should be holding an analogous position, or a position at Pay Level-13A or equivalent with minimum five years of service.

C- Desirable :
Knowledge of nonferrous technology including downstream processing and waste utilization

Pay Level -14 (144200-218200) (7th CPC)

Age : Up to 58 years (as on the closing date of applications)

Detailed application form alongwith terms and conditions can be downloaded from the website **www.mines.nic.in** and **www.jnarddc.gov.in** under the sub-head Career.

The Last Date for receipt of applications is 02.02.2026

Senior Administrative Officer

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."
- Philippians 1:21

With profound sorrow, we announce the passing of
Mr. S.D.J. Pandian (85 years)
Retd. Manager, State Bank of India & Managing Director, Syncfusion Software
who was called to be with the Lord on 13.12.2025 (Saturday)
beloved husband, father, grandfather, and uncle, cherished by family & friends.

The funeral service will be held today, 15.12.2025 (Monday) at 10:30 a.m.
at C.S.I. Immanuel Church, 35, Church Street,
Anna Nagar West, Thangam Colony, Chennai - 600 040,
followed by burial at Kilpauk Cemetery.

Deeply mourned by
Wife, Sons, Niece, Daughters-in-law, Grandchildren, Relatives & Friends.
Mob: 098406 50500

IN MEMORIAM

"**TIME SOFTENS** griefs edges, but never erases the mark of your presence etched deep into our everyday existence."–A.V.ANANDAKUMAR(19.09.27–15.12.89)–Fondly remembered by his children.

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

K. RAJANNA (1957-2021), President - IOEU fondly remembered on his 4th year Death Anniversary by S.Mohanraj (General Secretary) & All Members of Indian Oil Employee's Union (SR).

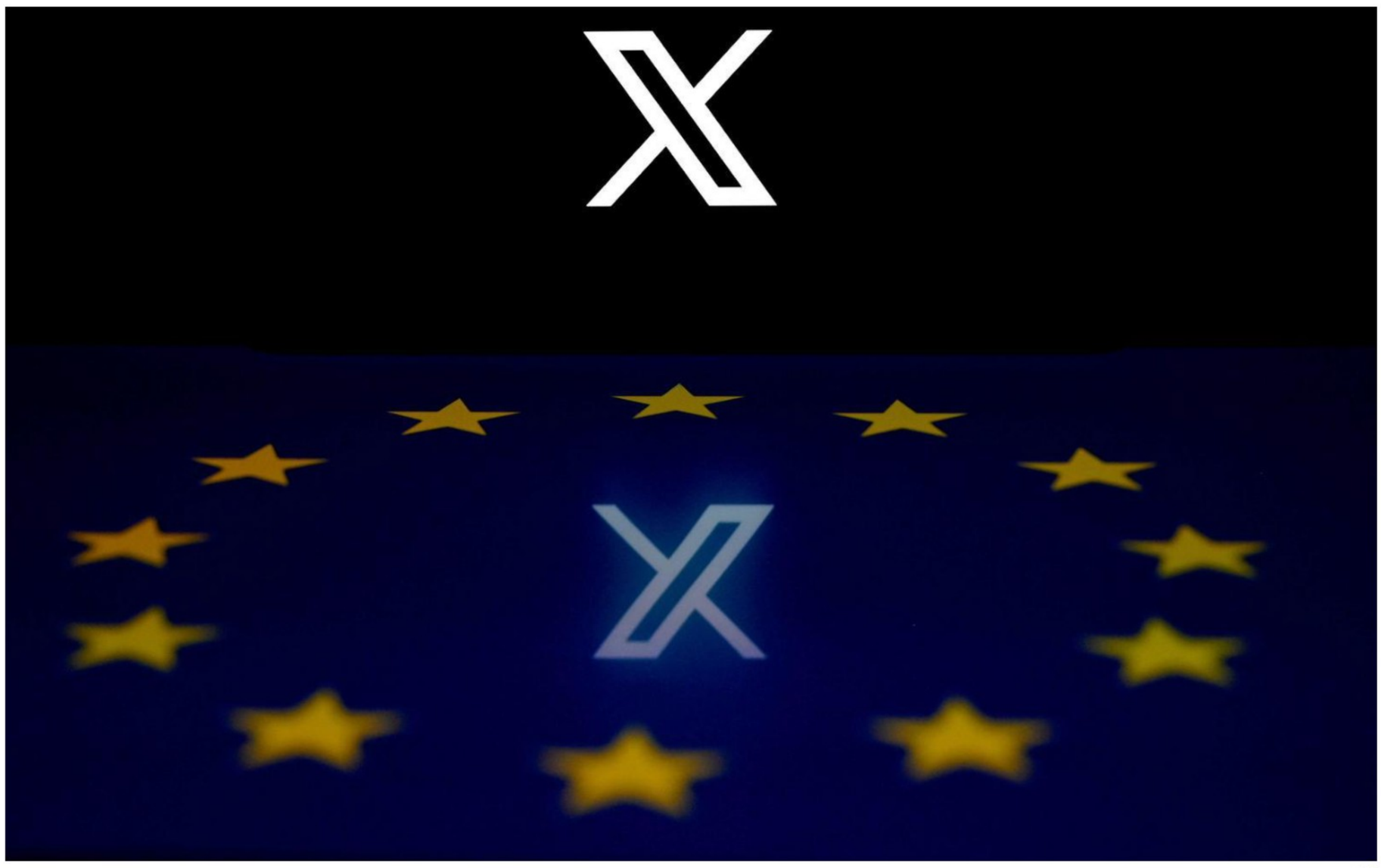
14th Anniversary

SOLAIMALAI RAMASUNDARAM
29 December 1936 - 15 December 2011
"In fond remembrance of our beloved Appa."
"Ramsundar & Malarvizhi
Ramkumar & Anuradha,
Kavita, Rachna, Bharath & Lakshita
Relatives & Friends."
+919821633784

IN MEMORY OF YOUR LOVED ONES
To dedicate a space in this section, Please contact:
Bengaluru: 98455 29981, 080 - 22071826
Hubballi: 0836 - 2338600
Mangaluru: 0824 - 2417575, from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Rate for Karnataka:
Minimum: Rs. 320/- for 2 lines.
Extra line: Rs. 160/-
B/W Display: Rs. 95/- per sq.cm;
Colour Display: Rs. 105/- per sq.cm
For Placing Advertisements Online log on to www.thehinduads.com
DONATE EYES GIFT SIGHT

Published by Nirmala Lakshman at No 19&21, Bhagwan Mahaveer Road, Bengaluru-560001 and Printed by C. Sridhar at Plot No. 13-D, Bommasandra-Jigani Link Road, KIADB Industrial Area, Bommasandra, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru-560099 on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., Chennai-600002. Editor: Suresh Nambath (Responsible for selection of news under the PRP Act).
ISSN 0971 - 751X

CACHE



AFP

Why was Elon Musk's X platform fined $140 million by the EU?

X, formerly Twitter, was fined by the European Commission for breaching its transparency obligations under the Digital Services Act. At the heart of the matter is X's controversial blue check mark system, which the Commission said 'deceives users'

Sahana Venugopal

The story so far:

On December 6, Tesla CEO Elon Musk used his social media platform X to call for an end to the European Union, posting, "The EU should be abolished and sovereignty returned to individual countries, so that governments can better represent their people". His outburst was trigged by a 120 million euro (around $140 million) fine slapped by the European Commission against X a day earlier, marking the first non-compliance decision under the bloc's landmark tech regulation.

Why was Elon Musk's X fined?

X, formerly Twitter, was fined by the European Commission for breaching its transparency obligations under the Digital Services Act (DSA). The EU regulator opened formal proceedings on December 18, 2023 in order to evaluate whether X disseminated illegal information and whether it could effectively combat the manipulation of information. The investigation is ongoing, but the European Commission has fined X over platform-specific features and policies that violate its DSA.

"Deceiving users with blue checkmarks, obscuring information on ads and shutting out researchers have no place online in the EU. The DSA protects users. The DSA gives researchers the way to uncover potential threats. The DSA restores trust in the online environment," said Henna Virkkunen, Executive Vice-President for Tech Sovereignty, Security and Democracy, in an official press release. She added this was the DSA's first non-compliance decision, with X being held responsible for undermining users' rights and evading accountability.

What did the EU investigation find?

At the heart of the matter is X's controversial blue check mark system. Before Elon Musk bought Twitter in 2022, the social media platform assigned blue check marks to notable individuals such as government officials, celebrities, and journalists after inspecting their account credentials, to help others verify these vetted account handles on sight.

However, Mr. Musk has always criticised this legacy check mark system. After he bought Twitter in October 2022 for $44 billion, the billionaire made the iconic verification symbol a product that anyone could buy. This led to a surge in account impersonation, as users ranging from pranksters to crypto scammers bought the blue tick mark to make themselves look more legitimate. In fact, even members of the Taliban temporarily had blue check marks. As confusion spread, X began deploying a mix of check marks – gold, blue, grey, and company logo-based ones – to differentiate verified users from unverified ones. These categories tended to overlap.

However, this resulted in even more confusion, a view which the European Commission shared. It stated that X's blue check mark for so-called verified accounts "deceives users".

Apart from the blue verification check mark issue, the European Commission pointed to X's advertisement repository, which it said did not meet the transparency and accessibility requirements of the DSA. Furthermore, the regulator said that X failed to meet its DSA obligations to give researchers access to the platform's public data.

These two points are linked, as the regulator pointed out that X's design made it difficult for researchers to identify who was paying for certain advertisements running on X, and whether there were any risks associated with the ads. The regulator also cited excessive processing delays. "The fine issued today was calculated taking into account the nature of these infringements, their gravity in terms of affected EU users, and their duration," said the European Commission.

The regulator added X had 60 working days to inform it about measures it was taking to fix the deceptive use of blue checkmarks, and 90 working days to submit an action plan to handle issues relating to its advertising repository and researchers' access to public data.

What was Elon Musk's reaction?

Since December 6, Elon Musk has both posted and re-shared multiple comments, memes, and infographics insulting the European Union and calling for it to be broken up. "The EU Commission should be disbanded in favor of an elected body and the EU President should be directly elected. The current system is rule by bureaucracy, not democracy," he posted on December 10. Mr. Musk also reshared a post criticising the EU for not fining Meta on similar grounds, since the WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook-parent also has a paid blue check mark verification system. Furthermore, X executive Nikita Bier claimed that the regulator had violated platform rules while announcing its fine against X, and said that its ad account was terminated as a result.

U.S. President Donald Trump also reacted to the news of the X fine, calling it "nasty" and noting that "Europe is going in some bad directions". He added that it had to be "careful" but clarified that Mr. Musk did not ask him to intervene in the matter. Trump administration officials including Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Vice President J.D. Vance both criticised the move as well. U.S. Ambassador to the EU, Andrew Puzder, slammed "EU regulatory overreach targeting American innovation" and said that the Trump administration would "challenge burdensome regulations that target US companies abroad."

Mr. Musk claimed that the EU imposed the "crazy fine" on both X and him personally, suggesting that he might in turn respond not just to the EU but also individual regulators.

It is not yet clear if he intends to formally pursue legal action.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

With the IPL mini auction set to take place on December 16, a look at the most expensive buys across all auctions since 2008

V.V. Ramanan

QUESTION 1
Which legend fetched the highest price of $1.5 million in the inaugural auction?

QUESTION 2
Apart from Andrew Flintoff, which England player was bought for a then record-breaking $1.55 million in 2009?

QUESTION 3
Which Indian, who had tasted success in the inaugural edition and would go on to win more titles, was bought in 2012 for $2 million?

QUESTION 4
For which player did Rising Pune Supergiant and Rajasthan Royals pay the maximum in 2017 and 2018 respectively?

QUESTION 5
Name the only South African who has the distinction of being the most expensive buy at an auction and which franchise bought him?

QUESTION 6
Who was the biggest winner in the last auction to be held in an Indian city? Name the city as well.

Visual question:
He was the joint biggest buy in 2010. Name him and the franchise that purchased him.
FILE PHOTO

Questions and Answers to the December 12 edition of the daily quiz: 1. The producer of the only Hollywood film in which superstar Rajinikanth acted. **Ans: Ashok Amritraj**
2. The heroine in *Gair Kanooni*, and *Bhagwan Dada*. **Ans: Sridevi**
3. This film marked the 100th milestone in Rajinikanth's career. **Ans: *Sri Raghavendrar***
4. Name the heroine who has acted in the highest number of films with Rajinikanth. **Ans: Sri Priya**
5. The connection Rajinikanth has with the 1981 film *Tik Tik Tik*, directed by Bharathiraja. **Ans: Latha Rajnikanth sang the song "Netru Indha Neram"**
6. Name the first film of Rajinikanth produced under the AVM Productions banner, and name the producer. **Ans: *Muratu Kalai*; AVM Saravanan**
Visual: This Rajinikanth starrer is regarded as a major turning point in his acting career. **Ans: *Mullum Malarum***
Early Birds: Siddhartha Viswanathan| C. Saravanan| Gaurav Deshmukh| Sadhan Panda

KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

He was laid up for a week due to the flu

She had to go under the knife in the very same week as her birthday. She is doing better now

S. Upendran

"I haven't seen your friend Vivek in a while. Is he busy travelling?"
"I'm sure he wishes he were. Unfortunately, poor Vivek is laid up again. He had a bad...."
"Laid up? Does it mean he's not well?"
"When you say that someone is laid up, you mean he's not doing well. It suggests that the individual is confined to bed."
"Because he is ill or has injured his foot or something?"
"It could be anything. The important thing is that he's forced to spend most of his time in bed – whether he likes it or not. Here's an example. Savithri was laid up for nearly a week with a bad case of cold and cough."
"My manager was laid up for a month with a serious back problem."
"That's a good example! When I was laid up, my friends brought me meals every day."
"What happened to Vivek? What is he laid up with?"
"Oh, you know Vivek. A very rash driver. He had a nasty fall on his motorcycle. He..."
"The fall happened more than a month ago! Don't tell me he still hasn't recovered!"
"He recovered from that fall all right. This accident happened a few days ago."
"Somebody should take away the bike from the guy. Was it serious?"
"He was pretty badly bruised from head to foot. Luckily, he didn't have to go under the knife."
"Lucky not to go under the knife? Does it mean to have surgery?"
"Very good! That's exactly what it means. When you go under the knife, you're operated on."
"So, the patient is literally lying under the knife the surgeon or doctor is holding!"
"Exactly! During a routine check-up, the doctors found several blockages in Nalini's heart. Looks like she'll be going under the knife this weekend."
"Really? What really scares me is in many surgeries the patient is conscious while he is under the knife."
"I know! It happened to my father when he was under the knife for a minor hernia surgery. He could hear everything the doctors were saying."
"Any idea how long Nalini will be under the knife?
"The doctor said anywhere between four to five hours. She should be up and about in a matter of a few weeks."
"Up and about? Doesn't it mean to feel well enough to do things you want to?"
"When you're up and about after a surgery, it means you're no longer laid up. You're able to get out of bed, and do the things that need to be done – without straining yourself too much."
upendrankye@gmail.com

Word of the day

Beatific:
experiencing or bestowing celestial joy; marked by utter benignity; resembling or befitting an angel or saint

Synonyms: angelic, saintly

Usage: *He smiled one of his beatific smiles and left.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/beatificpro

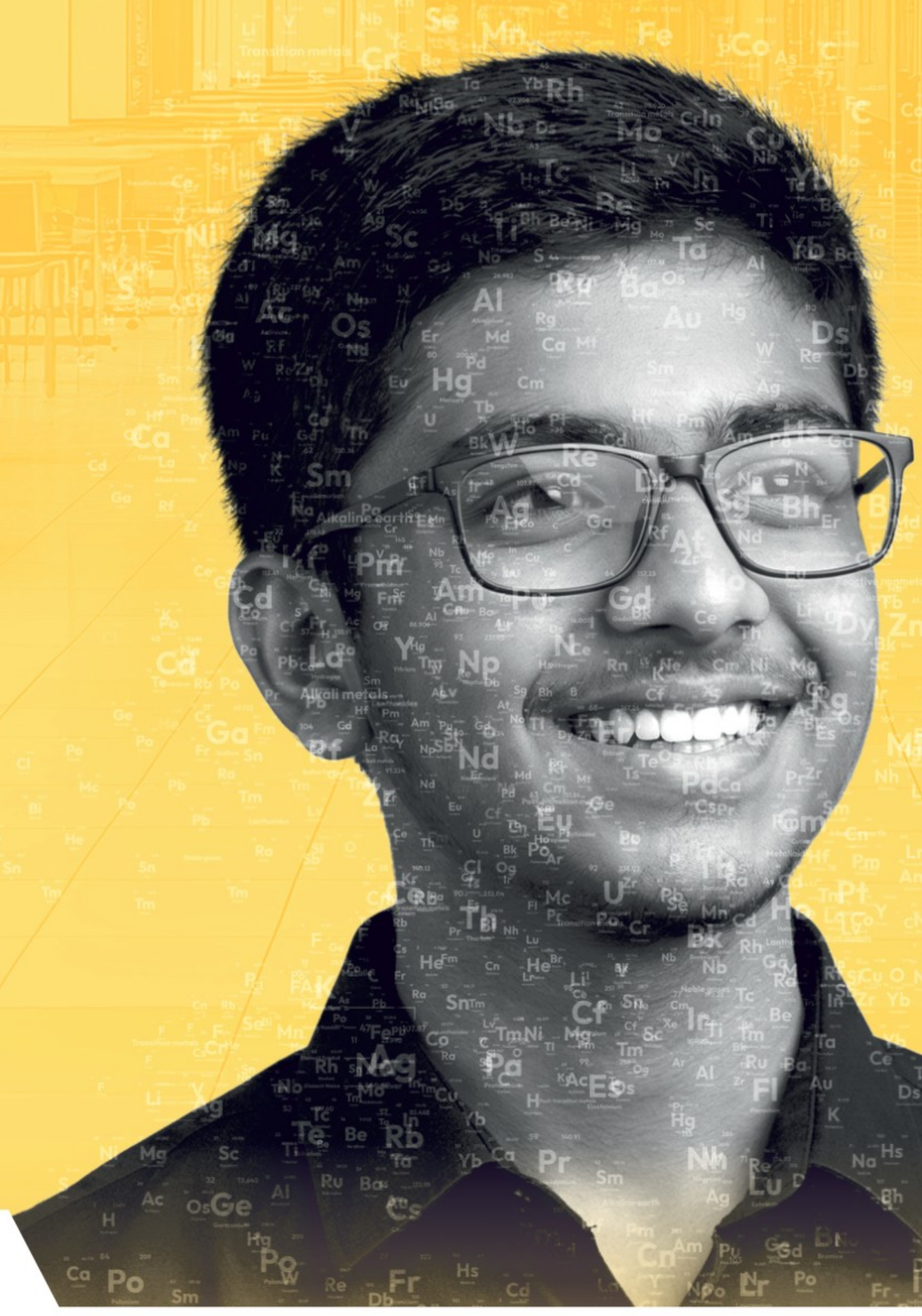
International Phonetic Alphabet: /bɪəˈtɪfɪk/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

ALLEN BENGALURU

Every Talent Deserves a Platform

Start your NEET, JEE and Foundation journey towards success.



National Champions of NEET (UG) 2025

AIR 4
Mrinal Kishore Jha
Classroom Course
AIIMS, Delhi

AIR 7
Keshav Mittal
Classroom Course
AIIMS, Delhi

AIR 8
Jha Bhavya Chirag
Classroom Course
AIIMS, Delhi

AIR 10
Aarav Agarwal
Distance Learning
AIIMS, Delhi

South Champions of NEET (UG) 2025

AIR 22
Ruchir Gupta
Classroom Course
AIIMS, Delhi

AIR 42
Pranshu Jahagirdar
Classroom Course
AIIMS, Delhi

AIR 88
Prajan Srivari G
Classroom Course
AIIMS, Delhi

AIR 122
Nidhin Karthik S
Classroom Course
AIIMS, Delhi

Next Could Be You!

National Champions of JEE (ADV.) 2025

AIR 1
Rajit Gupta
Classroom Course
IIT, Bombay (CSE)

AIR 2
Saksham Jindal
Classroom Course
IIT, Bombay (CSE)

AIR 6
Akshat K. Chaurasia
Classroom Course
IIT, Bombay (CSE)

AIR 8
Devesh Pankaj Bhaiya
Classroom Course
MIT, US

South Champions of JEE (ADV.) 2025

AIR 57
Chinmaya Shankar S
Classroom Course
IIT, Bombay

AIR 142
Anirudh Sharma
Classroom Course
IIT, Madras

AIR 143
Rishabh Pandey
Classroom Course
IIT, Madras

AIR 164
Sankarshana B R
Classroom Course
IIT, Madras

MBBS SELECTIONS : NEET (UG)

812 (2023) | 1025 (2024) | 1250 (2025)

IIT SELECTIONS : JEE ADV.

292 (2023) | 325 (2024) | 365 (2025)

*Subject to T&C of scholarship, rewards and other fee benefits.

ADMISSIONS OPEN SESSION 2026-27

NEET | JEE | KCET | Olympiads | Class 6th to 12th & 12th Pass

Appear for **Scholarship Test (ASAT)** & Get Up to **90% Scholarship***

21 Dec.'25

SCAN TO REGISTER

Don't Miss Your Special Fee Benefit!

TALLENTEX or ASAT
Winner Receive a Dual Advantage:
Scholarship* + SFB*

Zonal Office
ALLEN BENGALURU
95137 63144
allen.ac.in/bengaluru

Bengaluru Campuses : Jayanagar | Marathahalli | Banaswadi | Hebbal | HSR Layout | Bannerghatta | Basaveshwara Nagar | Sarjapura | Jalahalli | Indiranagar | Whitefield | Electronic City | RR Nagar | Yelahanka | Varthur | Begur

Regd. & Corporate Office
ALLEN KOTA
0744-3556677
allen.ac.in

Disclaimer: We provide an academic ecosystem and environment for the students to prepare for their target examinations. Studying at a coaching institute does not guarantee selection in the examinations. Selection also depends on other factors like preparation, available admission seats in the competitive exam, and the number of applicants appearing. All the students mentioned are part of paid and full time classroom course.

M BG-BGE

Natural disasters: With ₹1.22-lakh crore losses, State sets timeline for mitigation

Karnataka State Disaster Management Authority has prepared the road map for a 'disaster-resilient Karnataka' to reduce mortalities, economic loss and casualties

R. Krishna Kumar
MYSURU

Karnataka, which incurred a cumulative loss of over ₹1.22 lakh crore due to natural disasters between 2015 and 2021, has prepared a roadmap and set 2030 as the time frame to cut such losses by 75%.

The Karnataka State Disaster Management Authority (KSDMA) has prepared the road map for a "disaster-resilient Karnataka" to reduce mortalities, economic loss and casualties.

A file photo of crops lost owing to heavy rain in Arkalgud taluk.

Vulnerability profile

The preparation of the Karnataka State Disaster Risk Reduction (KSDRR) Road Map 2025-30 entailed drawing up a vulnerability profile, as per which 80% of the State's geographical area is prone to drought, 22% is prone to moderate earthquake and 24% of the geographical area in the State is prone to cyclones, heavy winds, etc,. Human-induced disasters like road and industrial accidents too are considered for risk assessment and disaster mitigation.

The KSDRR report, released recently, has set short, medium and long-term plans and stipulates 2029-30 as the year by which the economic loss, infrastructure damage, human and animal mortality and casualties, were to be reduced by 75% of the baseline established in 2026.

The study, which went into the preparation of the KSDRR Road Map, points out that not only does the State experience disasters of various types and intensities but estimates that nearly 61.10 million people are at risk.

There is hardly any economic sector which has not been affected by the frequent occurrence of natural disasters but the brunt of it is borne by agriculture.

While the cumulative loss across various sectors has been pegged at over ₹1.22 lakh crore, the loss between 2015 and 2021 in agriculture was pegged at ₹1.02 lakh crore. The crops over 1.84 lakh hectares were lost, while the loss in horticulture was pegged at ₹10,102.81 crore.

Road infra damages

Afte agriculture, it is the damage to roads which was the highest and affected 1.12 lakh km of roads during the assessment period and the loss incurred was pegged at ₹17,296 crore.

A study of drought-affected districts indicated that between 2001 and 2022, Kalaburagi, Gadag, Davangere, Belagavi were afflicted by drought 14 times, while a majority of the remaining districts reported drought on at least 13 occasions.

Climate change impact

The report was also a pointer to the extremities of nature and the impact of climate change in many districts in recent decades, as prolonged spells of drought were followed by severe floods. This included the districts of Raichur, Ballari, Kalaburgi, Yadgir, Bidar, etc,.

The socio-economic impact of natural disasters on various departments – from agriculture to education and tourism – has been studied in detail and broad action plans suggested for mitigation.

Timeline for targets

The road map proposes a department-wise action plan for effective and timely response and better recovery in case of any natural or man-made disaster. It stipulates that by 2026, all departments, districts and gram panchayats should prepare disaster management plans with baseline data of the year 2025-26.

During 2027-28, the State will collaborate with various stakeholders for technology transfer, knowledge management, etc. for risk reduction.

Nature's fury

Type of loss	Estimated lo
Agriculture	1,02,893.
Horticulture	10,102.
Plantation crops	3,179.
House damage	11.324.
Damage to roads	17,296.
Damage to bridges	2,709
Damage to govt. buildings	1,537.
Minor Irrigation	1,609.

*In crore Source: KSD

Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister flag 'poll irregularities' in Delhi rally

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI/BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Sunday visited the national capital to participate in the 'Vote Chor, Gaddi Chhod' rally at the Ramlila grounds by the Congress, alleging systematic "vote theft" and misuse of electoral processes by the BJP.

According to a press release from Mr. Siddaramaiah's office, the party said its mobilisation in Delhi was not merely a political protest but an effort to defend the constitutional right to vote, which it described as the cornerstone of democracy.

The Chief Minister's statement highlighted Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's role in raising concerns over alleged irregularities, including mismatched voter lists and booth-level manipulation across several States. Specific references were made to the Mahadevapura and Aland Assembly segments in Karnataka, where irregularities were flagged.

In Aland, the release noted, a Special Investigation Team has filed a chargesheet against seven individuals, including a former BJP MLA and his son, in connection with the alleged attempted deletion of nearly 6,000 voters' names ahead of the 2023 Assembly elections.

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar with Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi, Mallikarjun Kharge, and Priyanka Gandhi in Delhi on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The statement said the issue went beyond technicalities and directly affected citizens, particularly women, the elderly, Dalits, OBCs, minorities, and the poor, whose democratic voice was being compromised. It called for transparent electoral rolls, accountability of election authorities, independent institutions, and a voting system that inspires public trust.

Voting rights

Meanwhile, Mr. Shivakumar said the agitation was aimed at protecting the voting rights of the country's 140 crore people and had "no political motive".

Speaking to the media at Karnataka Bhavan in Delhi, he said the Congress, under the leadership of Mr. Rahul Gandhi and party president Mallikarjun Kharge, had launched the protest in Bengaluru and was now taking it to the national capital. "Elections are no longer being conducted in a free and fair manner. Despite repeated representations and evidence placed in the public domain, the Election Commission has not given satisfactory answers," he said.

Mr. Shivakumar said around 3,500 to 4,000 workers from Karnataka had arrived in Delhi to take part in the protest.

While the Chief Minister on Sunday evening returned to Belagavi, where the Winter Session of the legislature is on, Mr. Shivakumar stayed back in Delhi to attend to the National Herald case. While he met Congress leaders - Sonia Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi, Mr. Rahul Gandhi, and Mr. Kharge during the lunch organised by the party before the rally, he also met other leaders late on Sunday evening.

From Page One

Cong. leader Shamanur Shivashankarappa dead

Over a long political career, he left a distinct imprint in politics, education, industry and social service, and was widely respected across party lines for his organisational abilities and mass connect. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, besides several senior political leaders cutting across party lines expressed condolences over his death.

Mr. Shivashankarappa was admitted to Sparsh Hospital in Bengaluru on October 23 with a lung infection. Hospital chairman Sharan Shivaraj Patil said the veteran leader passed away at 6.28 p.m. on Sunday despite sustained medical care.

"He had been under treatment at our hospital for nearly 45 to 50 days. He was admitted with a lung infection and age-related complications, following which his condition gradually worsened and led to multi-organ failure," he said.

Earlier, his son and Horticulture and Mines and Geology Minister, S.S. Mallikarjun, had said that his father's condition was stable.

Shamanur: Senior-most MLA, Lingayat leader, industrialist and much more

Girish Pattanashetti
HUBBALLI

Senior-most incumbent MLA in India and a Lingayat strongman of the Congress, 94-year-old Shamanur Shivashankarappa, who passed away on Sunday, will be remembered not just for the empire he built as an industrialist and educationist, but also for his politics and the work he did as president of the All India Veerashaiva Lingayat Mahasabha. The leader from central Karnataka will be remembered as much for his untiring spirit and love for life, which kept him active even in his ripe old age.

Born on June 16, 1931, to Savithramana and Shamanur Kallappa, Mr. Shivashankarappa did not have a great start in business. But out of sheer grit and planning, he managed to build an empire that now comprises a chain of educational institutions and a group of industries. He belonged to the old school of politics, but had adapted himself to the changing political scenario.

When he defeated BJP candidate B.G. Ajay Kumar in 2023 to enter the Legislative Assembly for the sixth time from Davangere South, he was 92. He was the country's oldest MLA. To overcome the disadvantage of age, Mr. Shivashankarappa had used the unconventional method of canvassing for the election sitting in an electric buggy.

With the win, Mr. Shivashankarappa's family too had created a record of sorts. Along with him, his son S.S. Mallikarjun (now a Minister) too had won from Davangere North. Subsequently, another member of the family, Prabha Mallikarjun, his daughter-in-law, entered the Lok Sabha in 2024, making it three in a family.

Back in 1969

It was in 1969 that Mr. Shivashankarappa's stint with the Congress started. He won municipal council election in Davangere and subsequently became the president in the next couple of years. Mr. Shivashankarappa served the State Congress committee as treasurer for a few decades. He entered the Assembly for the first time in 1994, then went on to win for six times and also served as MP once. He was also Horticulture Minister during Siddaramaiah's previous tenure as Chief Minister.

In his political career, Mr. Shivashankarappa had close association with several Chief Ministers and leaders across parties in the State. At the same time, he also encountered controversies because of his remarks on certain issues. As head of All India Veerashaiva Mahasabha, a representative body of the Lingayats, Mr. Shivashankarappa also courted controversy for his wavering stance on the issue of independent religion status for Lingayatism.

As the Lingayat movement resulted in a rift between Lingayats and Veerashaivas, leading to the birth of the Jagatika Lingayat Mahasabha, he made efforts to unite both . It resulted in the mahasabha being named as 'Veerashaiva Lingayat Mahasabha'. His remarks on seers also had landed him in trouble.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah with Shamanur Shivashankarappa, MLA, during a mass wedding celebration organised to mark the latter's 95th birthday at Davangere on June 16, 2025. FILE PHOTO

CORRIDORS OF POWER

From matrimony to monastery

This is an issue which has been making headlines more often than not in Mandya in the recent past: of young men from the farming community unable to find suitable brides and seeking government intervention to "resolve the crisis."

The youth attribute their predicament to a perceived decline in demand for farmers in the marriage market, which they link to falling farm incomes and prolonged agrarian distress.

Though even the local farmers association took up the "cause", it has largely remained a fringe concern. But the issue resurfaced last week when a group of "eligible bachelors" urged the village authorities in Malavalli taluk to release funds so that they could establish a monastery.

Reason? They had failed to find suitable brides despite their efforts and now want to spend the rest of their lives in meditation and devotional chants. While the local authorities were sympathetic, it is not clear whether they gave any financial commitment to help establish a monastery.

But the youth got political backing as the local unit of the BJP lent its moral support by staging a symbolic dharna to draw attention to the predicament of the youth in their struggle to find brides. And, needless to say, the ruling Congress also came under attack even as the larger question of whether the crisis calls for policy intervention or divine intervention remains unanswered.

Tiger and cow

The so-called "pact" made while the Congress came to power in 2023 in Karnataka is at the centre of the ongoing debate on leadership change. It is believed there was an understanding that Chief Minister Siddaramaiah will transfer power to his deputy D.K. Shivakumar after completion of half of the five-year term. There has been both open and veiled war of words between supporters of the two leaders around this issue, and it has been resonating in the ongoing Winter Session in Belagavi also. Referring to it during a debate, Leader of Opposition in the Assembly R. Ashok made a reference to the famous folktale that highlights the sacrifice of virtuous cow Punyakoti that keeps its promise by offering itself as food to a tiger.

Mr. Ashok said, "Now, in the Congress government, we are talking about honouring a promise like Punyakoti. But between Mr. Siddaramaiah and Mr. Shivakumar, we do not know who is Punyakoti and who is the tiger who wanted to eat it!"

Night meetings and Q&A

Has the ongoing tussle on the issue of power sharing between Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar adversely impacted the preparations of Ministers in answering queries during the ongoing legislature session?

If Leader of Opposition in the Assembly R. Ashok is to be believed, it has resulted in Ministers giving "false information" to the House "because of the pressure on them by the rival camps."

Mr. Ashok's reference was to the alleged false information given to the House by Women and Child Development Minister Laxmi Hebbalkar on the release of instalments of Gruha Lakshmi scheme.

Mr. Ashok's explanation for the faux pas was the pressure caused by late-night meetings called by both the camps, leaving no time for the Ministers to prepare for the next day's session. Mr. Siddaramaiah responded with just a smile.

R. Krishna Kumar
B.S. Satish Kumar
Girish Pattanshetti

'Vacate govt. quarters in Shivamogga'

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

The Public Works Department has asked C.S. Shadakshari, president of Karnataka State Government Employees' Association, to vacate the government quarters in Shivamogga, as he was transferred to Bengaluru years ago.

The Executive Engineer of PWD (Special Division) in Shivamogga, on November 29, wrote to Mr. Shadakshari to vacate the government residential quarters (ON-4) in Basavanagudi, Shivamogga. When he was allotted the quarters, Mr. Shadakshari was the Accounts Superintendent at the office of the Joint Director of the Audit and Accounts Department in Shivamogga.

The PWD officer stated that Mr. Shadakshari was asked to vacate through a letter on October 10, 2024. In response, Mr. Shadakshari requested that his family continue to stay in the quarters until the end of the academic year. However, he did not vacate even after the academic year ended. When *The Hindu* contacted Mr. Shadakshari, he denied receiving any such letter.

KARNATAKA URBAN WATER SUPPLY & DRAINAGE BOARD
O/o The Chief Engineer, Jalabhavan, #P-4, 10th main, 3rd cross, 3rd floor, Saraswathipuram, Mysuru-09, Ph No: 0821- 2545894, Email: kwbcemys2014@gmail.com.

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only)

IFT no:1406/2025-26 **Date: 11.12.2025**

Tender for the work of "Providing Sewer network to Ashraya colony and construction of wetwell & rising main to pump sewage from wetwell to existing rising main infront of temple in ward No.31 Basthipura & ward no10 in Kollegala city under **TSP grants for the year 2025-26** .(Lumpsum Tender-No variation)" amounting to **Rs.240.76 Lakhs** (Excluding GST) has been invited vide Karnataka Public Procurement Portal indent **No:KUWSDB/2025-26 /WS/WORK_INDENT459.** Further details may be obtained through Karnataka Public procurement Portal website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sd/-
Chief Engineer, K.U.W.S.& D Board, Mysuru.

DIPR/MYSORE/SHIRDI SAI/1361/2025-26

CLASSIFIEDS MART
TO ADVERTISE VISIT
www.thehinduads.com
Bengaluru: 98455 29981 ■ 080-22071826
Mangaluru: 0824-2417575 ■ 2417580
Hubballi: 0836-2338600 ■ 2335700

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, AMIT Kumar Sharma, s/o; Shivram Sharma, r/o ; B–413, Himagiri Resd, Neelandri Nagar, E–City Phase–1, Hulimangala Rd, Blr–560100. Have changed my name as Amit Sharma.

I, Hari Krishna A S/O, Murthy A S N R/o E603 Shriram Suhaana Apartments, Doddaballapur Main Road, Yelahanka, Harohalli, Bengaluru, Karnataka, 560064 have changed my name to Hari Krishna Ayyagari.

I, RANIYAMMA W/o Ayyaru, R/at No.35, 9th A Main Road, Byraveshwaranagara Nagarbhavi Main Road, Nagarbhavi, Bengaluru-560072, have changed my name from Raniyamma to Karpakam vide affidavit dated 09/12/2025 sworn before Notary, K.S.Giridhar, Bengaluru.

I, AZHARULLA Khan Azeezulla Khan S/o Azeezulla Khan residing at No.39, 1st Floor Dickenson Avenue, Dickenson Road, Sivan Chetty Garden, Bengaluru-560042 have changed my name to Azharulla Khan vide affidavit dated 12/12/2025 before Meer Hassan, Notary, Bengaluru.

I, PERAMAGOUNDER RAVICHANDRAN, S/o. Peramagounder, R/at # 30, R R Mansion, 12th Cross, R M Nagar, Bangalore – 16 have changed my name from PERAMAGOUNDER RAVICHANDIRAN to PERAMAGOUNDER RAVICHANDRAN for all my future purposes by affidavit 12–12–2025 sworn before notary B.Seshagiri.

Actor assault: court questions SIT over missing witness

K.S. Sudhi
KOCHI

Pulsar Suni

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) which probed the 2017 actor rape case did not cite Sreelakshmi as a witness, though Pulsar Suni, a convict in the case, contacted and messaged her even while he was travelling with the survivor after abducting her, says the judgment in the case.

In her judgment, Special Judge Honey M. Varghese, who acquitted actor Dileep in the case and convicted six others, observed that the fact that Sreelakshmi was not cited as a witness "cast doubt in the prosecution case, especially considering the claim of the accused that the visuals were captured as part of a quotation at the instance of a lady".

Sreelakshmi was also found sending messages to Suni even 30 minutes before the alleged recording of the video.

The judge noted that there were incoming messages from Sreelakshmi to Suni's phone till 3.44 p.m. on February 17, 2017, the date of the commission of the offence. She also made six calls to Suni on the day between 6.22 p.m. and 7.59 p.m. Suni also received seven messages from Sreelakshmi between 9.03 p.m. and 9.56 p.m. on the day of the offence. The report from the Forensic Science Laboratory showed that videos were captured on February 17, 2017, between 10.30 p.m. and 10.48 p.m. The last message from Sreelakshmi was received at 9.56 p.m., which was nearly half an hour before the recording of the visuals, the court found out.

The court found that Suni made calls and messages to Sreelakshmi even while travelling with the victim, but SIT neither cited her as a witness nor produced her call data record and location details. As the person who contacted the accused immediately before the alleged commission of the offence, she could have shed more light on the incident. She would also have known about the alleged association of Suni and Mr. Dileep, the court noted.

The prosecution suppressed the contents in Sreelakshmi's phone, claiming that it would affect her privacy. The FSL report showed that Sreelakshmi used another phone. However, the CDR and location details of the second number were also not produced before the court, the judgment noted. The judge noted that no materials were available before the court to see whether she was interrogated by the police. No reason was also provided for not citing her as a witness.

My rights not protected, says survivor in actor assault case

She says that as early as 2020, she noticed changes in the way the case was being handled, and the most important evidence, memory card, was illegally accessed thrice while it was in court custody

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

> After years of pain, tears, and emotional struggle, I have come to a painful realisation that not every citizen is treated equally before the law. At the end of the day, this verdict made me realise how strongly human judgment can shape decisions. I also know that every court does not function in the same way
>
> SURVIVOR IN ACTOR RAPE CASE

The survivor in the 2017 actor rape case on Sunday made a scathing social media post, signalling profound disenchantment with the trial court's verdict last week.

In the post narrating her uphill struggle for justice and the setbacks she endured, she pointedly says that as early as 2020, she as well as the prosecution "noticed changes in the way the case was being handled, especially when it came to one particular accused".

"This verdict may surprise many people, but it did not surprise me. As early as 2020, I began to feel that something was not right. Even the prosecution noticed changes in the way the case was being handled, especially when it came to one particular accused. After years of pain, tears, and emotional struggle, I have come to a painful realisation that not every citizen in this country is treated equally before the law. At the end of the day, this verdict made me realise how strongly human judgment can shape decisions. I also know that every court does not function in the same way," she writes.

Later in the post, she lists out the reasons why she lost faith in the trial court. "My fundamental rights were not protected. The most important evidence in this case – the memory card – was found to have been illegally accessed three times while it was in court custody. Two public prosecutors resigned from this case, stating clearly that the court environment had become hostile towards the prosecution," she writes.

She also raises questions on the accused requesting for the same judge to continue to hear the case when she was demanding a fair trial.

The survivor says she wrote to the President and Prime Minister seeking intervention, and asked for open court proceedings, but the request was denied.

Kerala Governor says there is judicial overreach in Vice-Chancellor selection

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar on Sunday openly criticised the Supreme Court over its intervention in the appointment of Vice-Chancellors (V-Cs) in Digital University Kerala (DUK) and APJ Abdul Kalam Technological University (KTU).

The Governor deplored the tendency of one institution usurping the role of another in a democracy. He said the power to amend the Constitution was vested with Parliament and legislatures, and the courts were there to "interpret the Constitution and not to amend it".

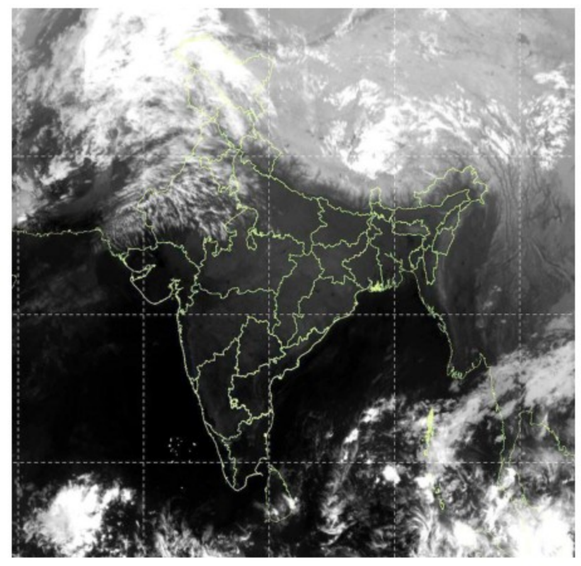
Referring to the dispute over Vice-Chancellor appointments, he said the authority to do so rested with the Chancellor as laid down in University Grants Commission regulations.

"Kannur University verdict honours the right of the Chancellor to select the Vice-Chancellors. But after some time, the very same provisions are being ignored by the Supreme Court and its judges," he said. He questioned the court's decision to appoint search committees for selecting the Vice-Chancellors.

He said such actions amounted to judicial overreach. "Taking [away] the tasks of every institution and doing them themselves [by the courts] is not correct," he said, while reiterating that the courts must only ensure that the law was followed and that each institution must function within its domain.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Monday: Cold wave conditions likely in Karnataka and Telangana. Dense fog likely in isolated pockets of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Chandigarh, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh.

30.2

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	30.0	14.0	Kozhikode	—	32.5	22.5
Ahmedabad	—	30.3	14.9	Kurnool	—	31.4	16.4
Aizawl	—	28.1	10.0	Lucknow	—	25.4	10.5
Allahabad	—	22.8	8.8	Madurai	—	31.1	19.5
Bengaluru	—	27.5	14.5	Mangaluru	—	33.0	18.4
Bhopal	—	—	7.0	Mumbai	—	33.8	20.9
Bhubaneswar	—	28.2	13.2	Mysuru	—	—	15.2
Chandigarh	—	8.6	7.7	New Delhi	—	23.6	8.6
Chennai	—	28.7	22.8	Patna	—	25.9	14.0
Coimbatore	—	30.2	17.3	Port Blair	—	28.5	23.4
Dehradun	—	25.4	9.2	Puducherry	—	29.1	19.4
Gangtok	—	18.9	9.0	Pune	—	30.9	13.6
Goa	—	33.6	19.0	Raipur	—	28.2	12.9
Guwahati	—	26.5	11.0	Ranchi	—	24.4	9.6
Hubballi	—	29.0	13.0	Shillong	—	20.2	8.6
Hyderabad	—	29.2	12.4	Shimla	—	17.6	9.8
Imphal	—	24.1	11.2	Srinagar	—	14.2	2.0
Jaipur	—	—	12.2	Thiruvananthapuram	—	31.2	24.1
Kochi	—	30.2	24.6	Tiruchi	—	29.7	18.6
Kohima	—	15.0	6.6	Vijayawada	—	30.8	18.1
Kolkata	—	27.1	15.8	Visakhapatnam	—	28.4	20.5

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.52	.80	.43	164	155	
Bengaluru	5	.21	.19	—	144	
Chennai	9	.24	.—	101	116	
Delhi	.12	.85	114	500	493	
Hyderabad	.18	.17	.28	138	86	
Kolkata	9	111	.24	78	88	
Lucknow	.12	.57	.16	323	293	
Mumbai	.12	.77	.33	185	128	
Pune	.—	.29	.45	358	269	
Visakhapatnam	.30	.92	.14	243	236	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Noida, Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 466 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Shillong, Meghalaya recorded a healthy AQI score of 19.

Air Quality Code: Poor | Moderate | Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

LDF to review poll results in Kerala, chart 2026 strategy

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

A highly anticipated Left Democratic Front (LDF) leadership meeting will review the post-local body election situation on Tuesday.

Ahead of this, the respective State secretariats of the CPI(M) and the CPI will convene here on Monday.

With the LDF allies reportedly divided over what led to the unanticipated drubbing at the hustings, the ruling alliance will likely weigh new strategies to plot a path back to retaining power in the 2026 Assembly election.

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that our client **("Client")** intends to acquire immoveable property bearing residential apartment bearing No. 103 comprised in the first floor of the building known as "Alpine Chermeal Manor" having a super built up area of 1,778 (One Thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy Eight) square feet situated at **Viviani Road, Richards Town, Bangalore** from its present owners. (morefully described in the **"Schedule"** hereunder and hereinafter referred to as the **"Schedule Property").**

Any person(s) /party(ies) having any right, title, interest or claim in the Schedule Property or any part thereof, in any manner or objecting to such transaction may, write to the undersigned with requisite documentary evidence within **Seven (7) days** from the issuance of this public notice, failing which, our Client shall proceed with the above-mentioned transaction, without any reference to such claim and the same, if any, shall be considered as waived and thereafter, no claims / objections / disputes will be entertained.

Any person(s)/party(ies) dealing directly or indirectly with regard to any of the properties or part(s) thereof listed in the Schedule below or in any other manner shall be doing so at his / her /their own cost, risk and consequences and our Client shall not be responsible for any such acts.

SCHEDULE
SCHEDULE-A

All that piece and parcel of immovable property bearing being a vacant land bearing erstwhile Municipal No. 49 and Municipal No. 49/1 measuring on the Northern Side: 76 Feet 1½ inches (Seventy Six Feet, One and a half) inches and 82 (Eighty Two) Feet 6 inches on the southern side and North to South: 125 (One Hundred and Twenty Five) Feet on the Eastern Side and 129 (One Hundred and Twenty Nine) Feet on the Western Side, in all measuring 10,071 (Ten Thousand and Seventy One) square feet and bounded as follows:

East by : No. 48, Viviani Road;
West by : No. 50, Viviani Road;
North by : Viviani Road; and
South by : Property of Mrs. Fernandes Godfray.

SCHEDULE-B

An undivided 711 (Seven Hundred and Eleven) square feet (equivalent to 711/10071) square feet in the Schedule 'A' Property.

SCHEDULE-C

Apartment No. 103, in the First Floor of the multi-storied apartment building known as ALPINE CHERAMEAL MANOR in the Schedule A property with a super built up area of 1770 (One Thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy) square feet together with all common areas and with one car park space in the basement.

Sd/-
Prasanna. Swaminathan, Advocate,
LAW CHAMBERS OF PRASANNA SWAMINATHAN
109, Level-1, Prestige Centre Point, Cunningham Road, Bangalore-560051.
Phone: +91 99860 95950
Email: prasannaswaminathan91@gmail.com

भारत कोकिंग कोल लिमिटेड
(कोल इण्डिया लिमिटेड की एक अनुषंगी कंपनी)
BHARAT COKING COAL LIMITED
(A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)
(एक मिनीरत्न कंपनी) / A Mini Ratna Company
(भारत सरकार का उपक्रम / A Government of India Undertaking)

NOTICE

All the tenders* issued by Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL) for procurement of Goods, Works and Services are available on website of BCCL **www.bcclweb.in,** Coal India Limited (CIL) e-procurement portal **https://coalindiatenders.nic.in** and Central Public Procurement portal **https://eprocure.gov.in.** In addition, procurement is also done through GeM portal **https://gem.gov.in.**
*This is applicable to all Open (Domestic/Global) Tenders issued through e-procurement portal of CIL.

कार्यालय नगर निगम, जोधपुर
पोलीटेक्नीक कॉलेज परिसर के अन्दर, गौरव पथ, जोधपुर
फोन संख्या :– 0291–2651491, हेल्पलाईन :– 0291&2651464 e-mail: ceo nnj@rediffmail.com
क्रमांक:–न.नि.जो. / DAY-NULM / SUSV-TVC / 2025–26 / 2225 दिनांक:– 11.12.2025

ई–निविदा सूचना
U. B. No. DLB2526SLOB26953

नगर निगम जोधपुर द्वारा ऑनलाईन स्ट्रीट वेन्डर्स सर्वे के लिए प्रस्ताव आमंत्रित किये जाते है। विभिन्न निविदा शर्तों www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in एवं (https://isg.rajasthan.gov.in/nnjodhpur) www.sppp.raj.gov.in से डाउनलोड की जा सकती है।

आयुक्त
नगर निगम जोधपुर
राज.संवाद / सी / 25 / 15778

ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ – ಧಾರವಾಡ ನಗರಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರ
ನವನಗರ, ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ – 580 025.
ದೂರವಾಣಿ : 0836–2956097, 2224195, 2224274, 2222161.

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ : ಹು.ಧಾ.ನ.ಪ್ರಾ./ಮೂ.ನಿ./ಬಿ.ನಿ./ಇ–ಹರಾಜು/2025–26
ದಿನಾಂಕ : 12–12–2025

ಇ-ಹರಾಜಿನ ಲೈವ್ ಬಿಡ್ಡಿಂಗ್ ಮರು ದಿನಾಂಕ ನಿಗಧಿಪಡಿಸಿದ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ ಧಾರವಾಡ ನಗರಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರದಿಂದ ಇ–ಹರಾಜು ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ : ಹು.ಧಾ.ನ.ಪ್ರಾ./ಇ.ಹ.ಪ್ರಾ/2025–26/3924, ದಿನಾಂಕ : 17–11–2025 ರ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆಯನ್ನು ದಿನಾಂಕ : 19–11–2025 ರಂದು ಹಾಗೂ 20–11–2025 ರಂದು ವಿವಿಧ ದಿನಪತ್ರಿಕೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನೀಡಿ ಸದರಿ ಇ–ಹರಾಜಿನ ಲೈವ್ ಬಿಡ್ಡಿಂಗ್‌ನ್ನು ದಿನಾಂಕ : 09–12–2025 ರ ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00 ಗಂಟೆಯಿಂದ ದಿನಾಂಕ : 11–12–2025 ರ ಸಂಜೆ 4.00 ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ ನಿಗಧಿಪಡಿಸಲಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಆದರೆ ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ. ತಂತ್ರಾಂಶದಲ್ಲಿ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆಯಿಂದಾಗಿ ಕೆಲವು ನೋಂದಾಯಿತ ಬಿಡ್‌ದಾರರಿಗೆ ಬಿಡ್ ಮಾಡಲು ತೊಂದರೆಯಾದ ಕಾರಣ ದಿನಾಂಕ : 12–12–2025 ರಂದು ವಿವಿಧ ದಿನಪತ್ರಿಕೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಲೈವ್ ಬಿಡ್ಡಿಂಗ್ ಮುಂದೂಡಿದ ಕುರಿತು ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆಯನ್ನು ನೀಡಲಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಕಾರಣ ಸದರಿ ಇ–ಹರಾಜಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಈಗಾಗಲೇ ನೊಂದಾಯಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಬಿಡ್ಡಿಂಗ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗಿಯಾದ ಬಿಡ್‌ದಾರರು ದಿನಾಂಕ : 16–12–2025 ರ ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00 ರಿಂದ ಸಂಜೆ 4.00 ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ ಲೈವ್ ಬಿಡ್ಡಿಂಗ್ ಮುಂದುವರೆಸಲು ಸಮಯ ನಿಗಧಿಪಡಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. (5 ನಿಮಿಷ ಡೆಲ್ಟಾ ಟೈಮ್ ಇರುತ್ತದೆ) ಕಾರಣ ಈಗಾಗಲೇ ಲೈವ್ ಬಿಡ್ಡಿಂಗ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಿದ ನೋಂದಾಯಿತ ಬಿಡ್‌ದಾರರು ಮತ್ತೊಮ್ಮೆ ಲೈವ್ ಬಿಡ್ಡಿಂಗ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಲು ಅವಕಾಶ ಕಲ್ಪಿಸಿಕೊಡಲಾಗಿದೆ ಎಂದು ಈ ಮೂಲಕ ತಿಳಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಸಹಿ/– ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರು,
ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ – ಧಾರವಾಡ ನಗರಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರ, ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ.

ಸಹಿ/– ಆಯುಕ್ತರು,
ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ – ಧಾರವಾಡ ನಗರಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರ, ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ.

ಡಿಪಿಪಿಆರ್/ಧಾರವಾಡ/985/ಮಾಧಿಜಾರ್/2025–26

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN:U40109KA1999SGC025521)

No. CGM(Tech)/DGM(PROC &APCC)/EE(PROC)-3/AEE7/2025-26/4786-803 Date:12.12.2025

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only)

KPTCL invites Bids on electronic mode against following Enquiry Numbers for the following works.

Enquiry number/ Name of the Work

KPTCL/2025-26/TL/WORK_INDENT3090

Combined package of:

Work-A: Re-conductoring of existing **110kV Raichur-Shahapur** DC line From existing **220/110/33/11KV** R/S at Raichur to Existing 220/110/33/11KV R/S Shahapur by providing intermediate towers for a distance of **72.515 kms** in Raichur district.

Work-B: Reconstruction of **110 KV Shahabad–B Bagewadi DC Line,** using DC Towers and Lynx Conductor for a distance of 59.885kms in the existing corridor from 220Kv Shahabad S/s to 110Kv Moratagi S/s in Kalaburagi district

Work-C: Re-Construction of existing **110 kV Humnabad-Gulbarga-I SC line** on SC tower by constructing 110kV DC new line on DC towers from 220/110kV Kapnoor sub-station to 220/110/11 kV Humnabad sub-station LILO at 110/33/11 kV Mahagaon sub-station using existing corridor for a distance of **50.819kms** along with construction of terminal bays in Kalaburagi Taluk and District.

Last date & time for receipt of Bids is **16.01.2026 @ 15.00 Hrs.**

All the above works, on **Total Turnkey basis** including supply of all matching materials / equipment, mandatory spares and erection (including civil works) of all materials /equipment , testing and commissioning ,De-commissioning of materials/ equipments along with buy back of released materials.

The bids will be received through electronic tendering mode only. The details regarding participation in the e-tendering process can be obtained by logging on to KPTCL website **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** with hyperlink "E Procurement KPTCL" or **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in on or after 17.12.2025. Any extension of Due date for Bid submission will be intimated in the Karnataka Public Procurement portal.** Any details required in this regard can also be had from the Office of the undersigned during Office hours.

All Corrigendum/Addendums shall be noticed by the bidders before the last date of submission of the Bids.

Sd/- Chief General Manager(Tech)., Corporate Office, KPTCL, 2nd Floor, Kaveri Bhavan, Bengaluru-560 009.

Your feedback will keep us Cleaner, Sharper and Bolder

Call our toll-free number
1800 102 1878
Or write to us at
customercare@thehindu.co.in

Scan the QR code to register your feedback

THE HINDU | thehindu businessline | FRONTLINE | SPORTSTAR | The Hindu Young world | THE HINDU

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDER (Through KPP Portal Only)

BWSSB invites Tenders from Registered Agencies for the following works.

Office of the Chief Engineer (North), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bengaluru-560009.

Sl No.	Division	IFT Number	Amount put to tender EMD (In Rs.)	Last date & time for Submission of Tender	Date & time for Opening of Tender
1	North-East	BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3400/ 2025-26 Date: 11.12.2025	Rs. 83,29,566/- Rs. 1,66,600/-	30.12.2025 upto 3.00 PM	31.12.2025 After 4.00 PM
2		BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3401/ 2025-26 Date: 11.12.2025	Rs. 79,03,976/- Rs. 1,58,100/-		
3		BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3402/ 2025-26 Date: 11.12.2025	Rs. 81,55,393/- Rs. 1,63,150/-		
4		BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3403/ 2025-26 Date: 11.12.2025	Rs. 79,78,668/- Rs. 1,59,600/-		
5		BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3404/ 2025-26 Date: 11.12.2025	Rs. 76,20,985/- Rs. 1,52,500/-		
6		BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3406/ 2025-26 Date: 11.12.2025	Rs. 16,60,952/- Rs. 41,600/-	23.12.2025 upto 4.00 PM	24.12.2025 After 3.00 PM
7		BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3408/ 2025-26 Date: 11.12.2025	Rs. 10,06,495/- Rs. 25,200/-		
8		BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3409/ 2025-26 Date: 11.12.2025	Rs. 20,50,684/- Rs.50,000/-		
9		BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3410/ 2025-26 Date: 11.12.2025	Rs. 15,63,991/- Rs. 39,110/-		
10		BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3411/ 2025-26 Date: 11.12.2025 (Reserved for Category-II(A))	Rs. 32,85,488/- Rs. 33,000/-		
11		BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3412/ 2025-26 Date: 11.12.2025 (Reserved for SC)	Rs. 13,96,096/- Rs. 18,000/-		
12		BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3413/ 2025-26 Date: 11.12.2025	Rs. 49,05,610/- Rs. 98,200/-		

Sd/- Executive Engineer (North-East)

Office of The Engineer in Chief, 2nd Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bangalore-560009.

13	UFW-2	BWSSB/EE(UFW)-2/PB/736/ 2025-26 Date: 10.12.2025	Rs. 76,34,730/- Rs. 1,53,000/-	22.12.2025 upto 4.00 PM	23.12.2025 After 4.05 PM
14		BWSSB/EE(UFW)-2/PB/738/ 2025-26 Date: 10.12.2025	Rs. 79,96,168/- Rs. 1,60,000/-		

Sd/- Executive Engineer (UFW)-2

Office of The Chief Engineer (WWM-West), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bangalore-560009.

15	(WWM-P-H&A. Valley)	BWSSB/EE(WWM-P)H&A.V/ AEE(WWM-P-H&A.V-1/AE/1518/ 2025-26 Date: 09.12.2025	Rs. 32,10,442/- Rs. 64,210/-	22.12.2025 upto 5.00 PM	23.12.2025 After 5.00 PM
16		BWSSB/EE(WWM-P)H&A.V/ AEE(WWM-P-H&A.V-2/AE/1521/ 2025-26 Date: 09.12.2025	Rs. 57.26 Lakhs Rs. 1,14,600/-		

Sd/- Executive Engineer (WWM-P-H&A.Valley)

The detail regarding the tender & participation in the e-procurement portal process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.

DIPR/CP/4278/Zen/2025-26

Time to pause

The RBI should wait to see the impact of lower interest rates on demand

Retail inflation in November 2025 came in at its second-lowest level, of 0.7%, ever recorded in this series of data, following up on October, which saw the lowest-ever rate of inflation. There are a few different takeaways from this data. The first is that the statistical base effects resulting in such abnormally low inflation levels will soon wane. For example, inflation in October and November 2024 was 6.2% and 5.5%, respectively. Since then, however, it slid steadily every month to reach 1.6% in July 2025. This, in essence, means that the statistical high base effect keeping inflation down will wear off between now and July 2026. The other factor to keep in mind is how skewed the current Consumer Price Index (CPI) is. The food and beverages category accounts for nearly 46% of the weightage in the index, which means that whatever happens to that category has an inordinately high impact on the overall inflation rate. For example, food prices contracted 2.8% in November 2025, dragging down the entire index. However, this contraction in food prices was statistical, since it was on a high base of 8.2% in November last year. The next year is likely to see a radically different inflation number. The government is expected to release the new series of the CPI in the first quarter of 2026-27. This new series will update the base year to 2024 from the earlier highly outdated 2012. The weightages will also be rejigged to better represent the consumption behaviour of Indians, which means food will not play such an overwhelming role in determining the inflation rate. Finally, the new base year will also mean statistical base effects will be addressed.

That said, the current inflation data is what the Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has to go on. In its December 2025 meeting, the MPC decided to cut interest rates by 25 basis points to 5.25%. The MPC will meet again in February 2026. Despite its prediction that economic growth is going to slow in the second half of the year, the MPC should nevertheless pause its rate cuts in February. Over 2025, it has cut rates by 125 basis points, the most significant such cuts since 2019. It should now wait to see whether these lower rates do spur demand and investment as they percolate through the system. The second reason in favour of a pause is that Budget 2026 would have just been passed, and so the MPC should allow the impact of fiscal policy be felt before further tweaking India's monetary policy. Finally, the MPC should take time to study the new CPI series, when it comes, to see how rate cuts might impact the new index and its redistributed weights.

An anomaly

The Centre must make burnt-area estimates of stubble public

In a statement to Parliament, the Environment Ministry said that Punjab and Haryana had collectively reduced "fire incidences" by 90% in 2025 compared to 2022. This is in reference to the burning of farm stubble, a traditional shortcut to quickly shed fields of paddy remnants and prepare them for a second crop – in this case, wheat – but that has in the last decade and a half been linked to spikes in air pollution in October-November in Delhi and surrounding cities.

As part of steps to address this, the Centre and the State governments have been employing a carrot-and-stick approach – fining farmers but, simultaneously, also providing subsidised farm equipment, combined harvesters and tractors as well as incentivising them to collect stubble and sell them to thermal plants for co-firing. There is little direct evidence to show that these measures have reduced the contribution of stubble burning to Delhi's post-monsoon air quality. That would require using mass-spectrograph measures to analyse the chemical make-up of pollutants over time and trace the weightage of stubble burning. That analysis is unavailable and so the government has been using proxies such as counting whether the number of active fires visible by satellites have been declining to evaluate this metric. Since 2020 there has been a decline in fires in Punjab and Haryana, prompting the government to take credit. It turns out that this was a pyrrhic victory. When images from a different satellite were used to compute another parameter called 'burnt area' – the actual land area that had been burned – the reduction was a more gradual 30%: from about 31,500 square kilometres in 2022 to 19,700 sq.km in 2025 (as of November 25, this year), an independent research outfit has found. Using data from another set of satellites called Meteosat, unambiguous evidence emerged that farm fires had shifted towards the evening. Unlike the other satellites, which orbit the poles, this one is 'geostationary', meaning it continuously looks at the same spot. The Centre has been using fire count-reduction based on polar-satellite data, which passes through India between 10 a.m. and 1.30 p.m. Since 2022, reports had been emerging that farmers had shifted their burning towards evening precisely to avoid detection by these satellites. The Supreme Court of India, when apprised of this in 2024, had expressly told Environment Ministry bodies to ascertain 'burnt area' to gauge stubble burning trends. Moreover, given that satellites have different resolution powers, there is no knowing what the true count of fires is at present. The Centre, however, has still not made year-wise burnt-area estimates public. Being disingenuous with data will only accelerate the erosion of public confidence in the government's claim on tackling air pollution. The Centre must immediately move to address this.

Courts must protect, not regulate free speech

Kaleeswaram Raj
is a lawyer at the Supreme Court of India

Thulasi K. Raj
is a lawyer at the Supreme Court of India

Freedom of speech is vital for any democracy. The suspect for any attack on the right to free speech is usually the executive or the legislature. However, the proceedings of the Supreme Court of India, in *Ranveer Allahbadia vs Union of India* and other cases have raised the worry that the potential risks of endangering speech could emerge from the Court itself. On November 27, 2025, the Court said that self-styled bodies are insufficient for regulation of online content and suggested the creation of neutral, autonomous bodies. It also suggested that the Government publish the draft regulatory guidelines and invite comments.

Existing laws and regulation

In India, the existing laws already regulate various aspects of speech. Section 67 of the Information Technology Act and Sections 294, 295 and 296 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) penalise obscenity. On online regulation in particular, Sections 66 of the Information Technology Act prohibits computer-related offences such as hacking and 66E of the Act prohibits publishing personal images of others. Section 66F of the same Act penalises cyber terrorism. The Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules were also promulgated in 2021 though they are criticised for their overreaching interference and penal provisions.

Under these rules, there is already an oversight mechanism by the Centre. These rules also impose prior restraint. To illustrate, as per clause II (c) under the appendix of the Rules, a publisher should take " due caution and discretion" while dealing with "activities, beliefs, practices or views of any racial or religious group". Despite the existence of these and other provisions, any attempt at further regulating the right to freedom of speech and expression must be subject to critical analysis, especially when it comes from the Court.

The first concern is about the nature of the case under consideration. The Bench was dealing with a plea challenging the First Information Reports at the instance of persons who are accused of improper or obscene content. The question of online content regulation was not originally the subject matter of such a case.

However, in the earlier proceedings on March 3, 2025, the Court said that it would "extend the scope" of the case to examine the question of what regulatory measures are required to prevent broadcasting which are "offensive to well-known moral standards of our society". This expansion is problematic at the outset. Identifying the problems of content and regulation is something that falls in the legislative domain. In Common Cause vs Union of India (2008), the Court cautioned itself: "Apart from the doctrine of separation of powers, courts must realize that there are many problems before the country which courts cannot solve, however much they may like to." When the Court takes on this task, it is limited by inherent institutional barriers, including that of technical expertise in the field of online media regulation. The Court's obstinacy for regulations in the field also would be vitiated by the same limitations.

> Any attempt at further regulating the right to freedom of speech and expression must be scrutinised, especially when it comes from the top court

The second is about the thin line between regulation and unlawful restraint. A five judge Bench of the Court in *Sahara India Real Estate Corp. Ltd.& Ors. vs Securities & Exch. Board Of India & Anr.,* (2012) had considered in detail the question whether regulation of media content is desirable. Being conscious of the dangers of blanket prohibition, the Court held that pre-censorship of the media must be avoided at all costs. In the context of court reporting, it was held that the postponement orders directed at the media must be done only as a last resort and must satisfy a high threshold of reasonableness.

An outline in the Constitution

Also, the grounds based on which the right to free speech can be restricted are laid down by the Constitution in Article 19(2). This consists of interests of sovereignty, security of the state, public order, defamation and others expressly enumerated. The Court itself, speaking through a five judge Bench in *Kaushal Kishor* (2023) held that additional restrictions beyond what is expressly laid down in Article 19(2) could not be imposed. It was categorically held: "The grounds lined up in Article 19(2) for restricting the right to free speech are exhaustive. Under the guise of invoking other fundamental rights or under the guise of two fundamental rights staking a competing claim against each other, additional restrictions not found in Article 19(2) cannot be imposed on the exercise of the right conferred by Article 19(1)(a) upon any individual."

It is interesting to note that on previous occasions, the Court has effectively restrained itself from venturing into blanket prohibitory measures. In *Adarsh Co-operative Housing Society Ltd. vs Union of India and Others* (2018), when a suggestion was made by a counsel urging the court to direct the film-makers to add a disclaimer before the movie, the Court repelled it.

It said that it is for the Censor Board and not for the Court to decide it, and even the Censor Board could decide it only after hearing the producer or the director of the movie.

Validity of the laws are to be determined by the Court as the constitutional umpire. During the Constituent Assembly debates, Pandit Thakur Dass Bhargava said that "the Supreme Court should ultimately be the arbiter and should have the final say" in situations of challenging the restrictions on freedom, by saying whether "the restrictions put are reasonable" (Constituent Assembly Debates. December 1, 1948). This is the scheme of Article 19 of the Constitution as well. Therefore, constitutional propriety demands that the Court abstains not only from the process of law making but also from the deliberation on the requirement for a law touching the citizen's freedom.

The case abroad

The Court's persuasive demand for further stringent laws in a tricky area could instigate prior censorship or statutory gag. Almost all the major democracies across the world focus on removal of offensive content and penalisation in case of breaching the order for removal of content. The Digital Services Act, 2022 promulgated by the European Union prescribes content removal protocols. The Network Enforcement Act, 2017 in Germany ensures prompt action on harmful content, without adversely impacting free speech. The Online Safety Act, 2023 of the United Kingdom focuses on removal of harmful content and imposing a fine in case of breach. The Online Safety Act, 2021 in Australia imposes a fine on non-compliance with regulation. Unlike these practices in democracies, countries such as China and Russia are invoking draconian laws to restrict online content. Surveillance and pre-censorship also dominate the online content regulation in these jurisdictions. Sadly, even some of the democracies which transform into autocracies also follow suit. David Landau and Rosalind Dixon, in a research paper, demonstrated that "would- be authoritarians at times seek to capture courts and deploy them in abusive ways as part of a broader project of democratic erosion...." (Abusive Judicial Review: Courts Against Democracy, 53 UC Davis Law Review 1313 (2020).

When the Court repeatedly asks for stringent laws to regulate Internet content and when the Centre readily agrees, it is a serious concern in terms of a citizen's freedom. Author Salman Rushdie, when censored, has put it succinctly – "Free Speech is the whole thing, the whole ball game. Free speech is life itself ."

The right moment to boost India-Ethiopia ties

Gurjit Singh
is an author and a former Ambassador to Ethiopia and the African Union

Ethiopia, with a population of around 109 million (2024) and as one of Africa's fastest-growing economies, is of growing strategic and economic interest to major partners, including India. Its substantial manufacturing base, large domestic market, and geographic position in the Horn of Africa make it one of the continent's pivotal states.

Despite internal challenges, Ethiopia continues to be viewed as a regional anchor of stability with an effective military, and a central role in the evolving politics of a subregion marked by conflict. It is also the headquarters of the African Union and a potential renewable-energy powerhouse, especially in hydropower, positioning it to become an important regional energy exporter.

Although landlocked, Ethiopia has traditionally relied on Djibouti for access to the Red Sea. Recent efforts to diversify access through Somaliland and Eritrea underline its desire to secure strategic autonomy in trade and logistics. Politically, the country is emerging from the traumas of civil conflict and is attempting to build a new national consensus. This regeneration provides an important window for enhancing India-Ethiopia engagement across multiple domains.

Deep ties with India

India's relationship with Ethiopia has deep and long-standing roots. For more than a century, Indian teachers and university professors have formed the backbone of Ethiopia's education system, shaping generations of students and earning enormous respect. Although the number of Indian teachers has declined, Ethiopia's interest in educational collaboration remains high. Ethiopia was the pilot country for the Pan-African e-Network project in 2007 and has maintained long-term cooperation with IIT Delhi for tele-education, demonstrating strong receptivity to modern educational technologies.

Today, Ethiopia sends one of the highest numbers of African students to India, often through government-funded programmes. Remarkably, it has the largest number of PhD students from Africa studying in India. Ethiopia also successfully used graduates from the Pan-African e-Network's Master's programmes to help staff newly opened universities and academic departments.

Expanding this education partnership – through digital learning, vocational training, university linkages and new scholarship frameworks – remains one of the most promising avenues for bilateral cooperation.

> With Ethiopia attempting to build a new national consensus, its engagement with India can be developed across multiple domains

Investment and defence cooperation

Indian investment in Ethiopia is another pillar of the partnership. Indian businesses first ventured into Ethiopia in the 1950s, but the real surge came after India extended major lines of credit beginning in 2006. These catalysed a wave of private investment that surpassed $4 billion. Ethiopian leaders continue to acknowledge the positive developmental impact of Indian investors, particularly at a time when International Monetary Fund (IMF) conditionalities require the country to mobilise new capital. While earlier investments focused heavily on agriculture, many investors withdrew due to taxation and operational issues.

Today, the most promising opportunities lie in mining – especially gold, critical minerals, and rare earth elements – which is an area where Ethiopia has vast but underexplored potential. The Indian Embassy's recent comprehensive mining survey identifies key opportunities while noting regulatory, infrastructural, and logistics constraints that must be addressed. If India can work with Ethiopia to commission and operate selected mines, this could help secure supplies for India's fast-growing renewable energy, battery, and semiconductor sectors. Mining cooperation could become a core element of a strategic economic partnership.

Defence cooperation is another promising frontier. Ethiopia was one of the first foreign countries to receive Indian military assistance, beginning with the establishment of the Harar Military Academy in 1956. Since 2009, Indian defence teams have supported the training of Ethiopian forces. After years of demanding internal deployments and operations in Somalia, the Ethiopian military requires fresh training and modern equipment to replace aging Soviet-era systems. India, with its competitively priced and battle-tested platforms, is well placed to become a key supplier.

A new MoU on defence cooperation and the first meeting of the Joint Defence Cooperation Committee held this year provide an institutional framework for expanding training, capacity building, and defence exports. Ethiopia, which has responsibly repaid earlier Indian lines of credit under the Indian Development and Economic Assistance Scheme (IDEAS) programme, could be considered for new defence-related lines of credit within IMF guidelines.

Potential for a new phase

As both countries enter new phases of development, and with Ethiopia now a member of BRICS, the moment is ripe to redefine the partnership. Ethiopian officials repeatedly express strong interest in attracting Indian investment, especially in pharmaceuticals, agro-processing, light manufacturing and mining.

India could help by updating bilateral agreements such as the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) and the Bilateral Investment Treaty to support private-sector engagement. Ethiopia, in turn, needs to address long-standing investor concerns related to foreign exchange availability, taxation, approvals, and consistency of regulations. The 2,500-strong and influential Indian diaspora, represented through the India Business Forum, continues to highlight foreign exchange accessibility as a key bottleneck.

At the multilateral level, expanding cooperation through BRICS, G-20 platforms, and South-South frameworks strengthens political convergence. Demonstrating success stories of Indian investment within Ethiopia and across Africa could help both countries build wider regional partnerships. Under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), Ethiopian-based Indian companies can now access East African and continental markets more easily, making Ethiopia an attractive hub for Indian enterprises. In a rapidly changing global economy – marked by tightening regulations in the United States and European Union and uncertainty around arrangements such as African Growth and Opportunity Act – India's duty-free tariff preference scheme for Ethiopian exports remains important. Ethiopia can leverage this preferential access by welcoming more Indian investors, including in export-oriented manufacturing with buy-back arrangements.

Overall, the prospects for India-Ethiopia relations are bright. With renewed political will, targeted reforms, and strategic alignment, the partnership can evolve into one of the most dynamic and mutually beneficial relationships between India and Africa in the coming decade.

The meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali at Johannesburg during the G-20 summit has catalysed the relationship again.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Kerala results

The results of the 2025 Kerala local body polls indicate the desire of the people of Kerala for change (Front page, December 14). It is remarkable that the Bharatiya Janata Party, largely driven by its religious ideology, has made an impact in the State. It would be interesting to see how the party evolves in the Assembly election and has a presence in the State's politics.

Upadhyayula Ramalakshmi,
Visakhapatnam

All the tall talk of development alone will not suffice as the people expected much more from the Left Democratic Front (LDF) government. There are several factors that had a role in the LDF's drubbing which includes the financial crunch due to lopsided priorities and the woes of farmers and government staff. In a nutshell, the people of Kerala have served a strong warning to the government to mend its ways.

Balakrishna Menon M.K.,
Tattamangalam, Palakkad, Kerala

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

A people-led climate intelligence movement

Supriya Sahu

Additional Chief Secretary, Environment, Climate Change and Forests Department, Government of Tamil Nadu

Pratim Roy

Co-founder of Keystone Foundation and a rural development expert and ecologist

Tabinda Bashir

Advisor, Climate Change and Energy - Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, U.K. Government

Globally, monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) systems have become central to climate transparency. Under the Paris Agreement, countries must track emissions, adaptation progress, and climate finance to show movement towards their Nationally Determined Contributions. COP30 reinforced this through the Global Implementation Tracker, the Belém Mission to 1.5°C, and voluntary indicators for the Global Goal on Adaptation.

India aligns with this direction, emphasising that stronger domestic MRV is essential both for transparency and for unlocking climate finance, while also underscoring that developing countries need substantial financial and technical support to build such systems. Also, climate finance must not only increase in scale but also shift power downwards to frontline communities like the Indigenous Peoples, and local communities. These communities who observe climate change daily and bear its greatest impacts must lead monitoring efforts, govern funds, and access resources that support local adaptation and environmental stewardship.

Yet, MRV systems still rely heavily on remote sensing, administrative datasets, and external expertise, leaving little room for community-generated insights. It is in this context that Tamil Nadu's community-based environmental MRV (CbMRV) initiative becomes relevant. It makes community-generated environmental intelligence a formal part of climate governance.

The CbMRV model

Across Tamil Nadu, climate change is reshaping daily life: in Erode, farmers describe rains collapsing into short, intense bursts, and increasing heat waves; along the Cuddalore coast, salinity is moving inland and shifting tides are affecting fish catch; and in the Nilgiris, tribal foragers report thinning forest moisture and erratic flowering cycles. These signals emerge first at the smallest ecological scales, yet policymaking relies on coarse datasets as climate intelligence has rarely been produced locally.

CbMRV was created to change exactly that. It enables villages to generate systematic, science-ready environmental data. It weaves traditional ecological knowledge with field-based monitoring of rainfall, temperature, soil and water health, biodiversity, fish catch, cropping patterns, livelihoods, and even carbon stocks and emissions. This evidence is integrated into a digital dashboard that informs decision-making across village, district and State levels. CbMRV thus reframes governance as a partnership between communities and institutions, rather than a top-down exercise.

The initiative began in 2023 under the UK PACT programme, which enabled Tamil Nadu to pilot a community-based MRV system that could support just transition goals. In collaboration with Keystone Foundation and other scientific partners, three ecologically distinct landscapes were selected: Aracode in the Nilgiris (mountain forests), Vellode in Erode (agriculture and wetlands), and Killai in Cuddalore (mangroves and coastal fisheries).

In these locations, communities contributed generational knowledge that shaped the indicators, monitoring protocols and digital tools that now underpin CbMRV. Carbon feasibility studies were conducted in parallel to assess how reliable village-scale data could support future community-centred carbon projects. In less than three years, each pilot village has developed into a functional environmental knowledge hub, with trained monitors, field instruments and digital systems capable of generating real-time data.

Community climate stewards

A defining achievement of the initiative is the emergence of 35 key community stakeholders (KCS) – farmers, fishers, women, youth, elders, and tribal knowledge-holders – who now serve as first community climate stewards. They collect and interpret environmental data, and can identify trends, work with local institutions, and help translate information into daily decisions in the near future.

CbMRV is also reshaping how data flows through governance systems. At the panchayat level, it can complement Gram Panchayat Development Plans and programmes such as the Climate Resilient Village, strengthening vulnerability assessments, crop diversification decisions, and natural resource management. At the block and district levels, village-scale evidence can support watershed development, agricultural advisories, and disaster preparedness. At the State level, CbMRV can enhance the evidence base for the Tamil Nadu Climate Tracker, the State Action Plan on Climate Change, the Green Tamil Nadu Mission, coastal adaptation programmes and climate investment pathways under the Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company.

A key aim is long-term institutionalisation and the creation of a permanent green workforce. Training modules, applications, field protocols and dashboards developed under CbMRV are being proposed for integration into community colleges, Industrial Training Institutes, forestry and agricultural institutions, Panchayat Raj training centres, and State skill development programmes. With sustained support, community monitors can maintain long-term environmental baselines and eventually replicate the system across wider geographies.

When the tools of science are shared rather than concentrated, and when governance grows from the ground up, climate action becomes both more democratic and more resilient.

A new community-driven MRV framework is bringing real-time, village-scale environmental data into Tamil Nadu's climate governance system

An unprecedented situation in Maharashtra

For the first time, there was no LOP in both Houses during the winter session

DATAPOINT

Vinaya Deshpande Pandit
vinaya.deshpande@thehindu.co.in

The week-long winter session of the Maharashtra Legislature concluded on December 14 in Nagpur. For the first time in the history of the State, there was no Leader of the Opposition (LOP) in both the Houses. The 10% seat strength is not a rule, but a convention for a party to be formally recognised as the official Opposition party and to have a LOP. The Congress has 10% seats in the Upper House. As the ruling dispensation overlooks precedents and the Opposition fails to put together a united front, a key question arises: is the appointment of an LOP a democratic necessity or the Speaker's discretion?

"In a democracy, the Opposition is not only tolerated as constitutional, but must be maintained because it is indispensable. The best servants of the people, like the best valets, must whisper unpleasant truths in the master's ear," police commentator Walter Lippmann said in an essay, The Indispensable Opposition, in 1939.

In Maharashtra, the Opposition has been rallying against the government to seek the LOP position since last year in the Legislative Assembly, and over the last few months in the Legislative Council. During the winter session of the Assembly, the State witnessed an unprecedented situation for the first time since its formation in 1960: both Houses did not have an LOP.

The last Opposition leader in the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly was Vijay Waddettiwar from the Congress. His term expired on November 26, 2024. In the Legislative Council, the term of Shiv Sena UBT leader Ambadas Danve as LOP ended on August 29, 2025. Maharashtra's legislative history shows that a LOP has, until now, generally been appointed without much delay.

Under the Leaders of Opposition in Maharashtra Legislature Salaries and Allowances Act, 1978, "The 'Leader of Opposition' in relation to either House of the State Legislature, means that member of the State Legislative Assembly or the State Legislative Council, as the case may be, who is for the time being the Leader in that House of the party in opposition to the State Government having the greatest numerical strength and recognised as such by the Speaker of the Assembly or the Chairman of the Council, as the case may be."

Last year, when the Speaker did not appoint an LOP after Mr. Waddettiwar's term ended, Shiv Sena UBT leader and contender for the post, Bhaskar Jadhav, wrote a letter to the Legislature Secretariat seeking in writing the rules and laws under which the appointment is made. In reply, Subhash Nalawade, Deputy Secretary of the Maharashtra Legislature Secretariat, said on December 9, 2024, "There is no specific provision for the choice of the Opposition Leader in the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly Rules. The honourable Speaker takes this decision after taking into consideration the prevalent parliamentary conventions and precedence." Political scientist Suhas Palshikar observed that precedents, convention, and goodwill play an important role during proceedings.

While the 10% majority is a convention, it has been overlooked in the past. In 1962, the Congress had a brute majority of 215 in a House of 264 seats. The single largest Opposition party was the Peasants and Workers Party of India, with 15 seats. Opposition parties then came together to form the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti, which was granted the status of the official Opposition party and Krishnarao Dhulap was declared the LOP. Similar instances occurred in 1967 and 1972 as well.

This time, not only has the State's legislative precedent been overlooked, but the Opposition parties too have failed to come together to stake claim to the position. In the 2024 Assembly elections, the Shiv Sena UBT secured 20 seats, the Congress 16, and the NCP SP 10. But the letter for the LOP position has been given only by the Shiv Sena UBT. The current strength of the Legislative Assembly is 288.

In the upper House, the Congress has 10% of the total seats. It submitted a letter proposing the name of Bunty Patil for the position, on September 2. In a House of 78, the Congress has 8 MLCs, Shiv Sena UBT 5, and the NCP SP 2.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has maintained that it is the discretion of the Speaker and the Chairperson of both the Houses to take the decision. Maharashtra Assembly Speaker Rahul Narwekar said that the Opposition party staking claim to the position should have 10% seats in the House.

Are methane emissions in India being missed?

Satellites show that emissions at key sites can be up to 10 times higher than estimates

DATA POINT

Suyash Nandgaonkar

What fuels landfill fires and is 84 times more potent than carbon dioxide over a 20-year period? The answer is methane. While it is an excellent fuel for kitchen stoves, CNG vehicles, and power plants, it is also busy burning the planet. Methane is generated naturally by decomposing organic matter. The same prehistoric processes that created natural gas reserves are now at work within landfills. Managing methane means not just cleaner cities but also a significant step toward our climate ambitions.

Around 15% of India's methane emissions are from the waste sector. Unlike the agriculture or energy sectors, which require complex, long-term reforms, waste management offers immediate gains through targeted action. Crucially, the policy frameworks and incentives are already in place through national programmes such as the Swachh Bharat Mission.

Targeted action is only possible if we know exactly where the hotspots are, but tracking an invisible gas is difficult. Historically, we have relied on models that estimate emissions by tracking incoming waste volumes and applying baseline assumptions. However, this approach depends on accurate, recurring data, which is often scarce in developing countries. Because such data are aggregated at the regional or national levels and updated infrequently, it makes pinpointing individual sources nearly impossible.

The alternative is physical monitoring, which is even more challenging in the Indian context. Ground-level detection requires expensive equipment, regular maintenance, and constant oversight, making it logistically and technically difficult to scale.

As technology advances, satellites are stepping into this gap. This data broadly fall into two categories: regional measurements that monitor methane over a few kilometers (frequent and useful for national trends), and fine-resolution detection that can pinpoint hotspots down to a few square meters (critical for targeted action).

Satellite data

India has already taken the first steps toward this opportunity. Last year, a paper published by scientists from ISRO quantified anthropogenic methane emissions across the country using satellite data that was acquired in 2023. Based on these measurements, the study identified major dumpsites in Pirana (Ahmedabad), Deonar and Kanjurmarg (Mumbai), and a sewage outlet as significant emitters. The National Green Tribunal took these findings further, establishing a committee to conduct ground investigations at the flagged sites.

Over the past few years, multiple new satellite missions have emerged, such as CarbonMapper's Tanager and the Space Research Organisation Netherlands (SRON) projects. These satellites provide public data covering major landfills across the country, including Ghazipur and Okhla in Delhi, Jawaharnagar in Hyderabad, and Dhapa in Kolkata. Platforms such as ClimateTRACE and WasteMap collate this global monitoring data, combining it with baseline statistics for advanced modeling. These newer models refine traditional calculations by integrating real-time satellite observations and updating landfill-specific estimates to reflect reality.

Globally, satellite surveys estimate that actual landfill emissions can exceed model-based predictions by around 1.8 times. In India, city-level comparisons are difficult due to a lack of granular data on waste characteristics. Consequently, we must rely on State-level estimates from 2018 for sector-wise breakdowns, as newer public data have not yet been compiled. This

The landfill at Bhalswa in northwest Delhi FILE PHOTO: SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

discrepancy between advanced satellite observations and older State models highlights a critical information gap: we currently cannot agree on the true scale of the numbers or the location of the hotspots.

Differing data

Take Delhi as an example: its 2018 emissions inventory estimates 1.07 million tons of CO_2 equivalent annually from the entire solid waste sector. Recent satellite observations, however, estimate emissions from just Ghazipur and Bhalswa alone to be between 0.85 and 0.96 million tons – almost as much as the sector's entire theoretical footprint. In Mumbai, the data offer a different perspective. While calculations suggest that the Kanjurmarg landfill accounts for 11% of the city's waste emissions, an expected number given its engineered design. However, satellite data show it to be emitting 1.05 million tons. This is almost 10 times the model's estimate and approximately half of the entire State's solid waste emissions. A similar discrepancy emerges in Ahmedabad: while Gujarat estimates 0.73 million tons for the entire sector, satellite observations show the Pirana landfill alone emitting between 0.60 and 0.81 million tons.

These are not just numbers. They indicate potential leakages, accelerated methane generation, or opportunities to refine our engineered systems.. Critically, these are hazards we never tackled

By making data the backbone of our waste policy, we can turn one of our biggest environmental challenges into our smartest climate solution

simply because we did not know they existed. Now, we can not only gauge the magnitude of the problem but, in the case of large landfills, also pinpoint the exact source of the leaks, allowing for precise, targeted solutions.

Of course, these observations come with limitations. Cloud interference and complex weather dynamics mean that satellite data cannot fulfil its potential in isolation. Urban local bodies must complement these findings with ground-level insights, a step that is especially critical for the massive, unwieldy landfills of our metro cities. The real breakthrough lies in linking satellite detection with ground-level action.

Feedback loop

When satellites detect a methane hotspot, ground teams can immediately investigate the cause – whether it is poor waste coverage, a gas collection failure, or illegal dumping. This creates a powerful feedback loop: space-based detection guides targeted ground interventions, while ground data validate and improve satellite accuracy. Integrating other data sources beyond just methane monitoring can further enhance the efficiency of this loop.

At open dumpsites such as Ghazipur, recording dumping and reclamation patterns provides critical insight into how human activity drives methane generation. Meanwhile, at engineered landfills such as Jawaharnagar and Kanjurmarg, infrastructure data on existing gas collection systems can help pinpoint leaks and identify hidden hotspots. Cities such as Bengaluru, with their advanced waste management systems, are well-positioned to integrate these datasets to increase transparency.

To address this, we need coordinated action on three critical fronts: expanding satellite monitoring to cover all major waste sites, establishing on-ground validation systems in metro cities, and creating standardised data-sharing protocols between urban local bodies and oversight agencies.

Currently, urban local bodies operate in silos, separate from the State Pollution Control Boards that oversee them. This disconnect hinders coordinated action on methane reduction. However, the revised municipal waste guidelines already envision a centralised data portal for bulk waste management, handling the wet waste that is the primary source of untreated methane. This portal could be expanded to connect with a standardised nationwide dataset for tracking emissions. Regional bodies such as the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) in the NCR can oversee this monitoring, while the Swachh Bharat Mission can integrate methane targets, aligning them with other central schemes.

This integrated approach delivers multiple co-benefits that make the investment worthwhile. Methane's potential as a fuel is already recognised in policy. Just recently, Indore has utilised the Gobardhan scheme to set up a Bio-CNG plant from its waste.

This strategy creates a powerful ecosystem: satellites detect hotspots, ground teams investigate and fix leaks, and standardised data sharing ensures insights reach decision-makers instantly. What is needed now is coordinated implementation across these three fronts. By making data the backbone of our waste policy, we can turn one of our biggest environmental challenges into our smartest climate solution.

Suyash Nandgaonkar is a Senior Research and Policy Associate at the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago (EPIC India)

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO DECEMBER 15, 1975

Equipment to fight fire: T. Nadu proposal

New Delhi, Dec. 14: The need for taller ladders, hydraulic platforms and other sophisticated equipment for fire-fighting in skyscraper buildings has been highlighted by the Tamil Nadu Government in its note to the 18th meeting of the Standing Fire Advisory Committee to be held in Lucknow on Dec. 13.

Pointing out the difficult task faced by the fire services in Madras when the multi-storeyed building of the Life Insurance Corporation caught fire, the Tamil Nadu Government has proposed that such equipment should be bought by the Centre and supplied to the States.

In the State Government's view, the fire services should also be equipped with helicopters to cope with emergencies like rescue during the floods and fires in unapproachable places. In normal times, such aircraft could be loaned to the Agricultural Department.

The State Government has also suggested the replacement of mobile tank units of less than 4,500 litres capacity and fire tender with diesel engine driven appliances of higher capacity.

The Orissa Government has proposed the issue of licences by the Centre to the States for importing rescue equipment, especially rescue gear, which were not available indigenously.

These and other suggestions have already been considered by the Directorate-General for Civil Defence and would come up at the Lucknow meeting. The Deputy Home Minister, Mr. F.H. Mohsin, would preside over the deliberations.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO DECEMBER 15, 1925

The Ceylon Boat Mail

The Ceylon Boat Mail arrived in Madras-Egmore to-day about four and a half hours late owing to transhipment of passengers on way. The mail was crowded with passengers, both in the upper classes and in the 3rd class. Through postal mails due to arrive in Madras to-day have also arrived by the mail. With regard to the through postal mails that ought to have arrived in Madras yesterday and the day before it is understood that on those days, owing to the breaches, they were sent back to Ceylon from Dhanushkodi to be brought via Tuticorin and they will be arriving shortly.

From Page One

11 dead as gunmen fire on Jewish holiday event

"Three months ago I wrote to the Australian Prime Minister that your policy is pouring oil on the fire of anti-Semitism," he said, referring to a letter to Mr. Albanese in August following Canberra's announcement that it would recognise Palestinian statehood.

Israeli President Isaac Herzog said Jewish people who had gone to light the first candle of the Hanukkah holiday on the beach had been attacked by "vile terrorists".

Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Saar said he was appalled by the shooting and that Australia's government must "come to its senses" after countless warnings. "These are the results of the anti-Semitic rampage in the streets of Australia over the past two years, with the anti-Semitic and inciting calls of 'Globalise the Intifada' that were realised today."

Witnesses said the shooting at the famed beach on a hot summer's evening lasted about 10 minutes, sending hundreds of people scattering along the sand and into nearby streets and parks. The police said around 1,000 people had attended the Hanukkah event alone.

Brave intervention

Video footage filmed by onlookers appeared to show two gunmen with long guns firing from a footbridge leading to the beach. Authorities said far more people would have been killed were it not for a bystander, identified by local media as fruit shop owner Ahmed al-Ahmed, 43, who was filmed charging a gunman from behind, grappling with him and wresting a rifle from his hands.

"There are many, many people alive tonight as a result of his bravery," said Chris Minns, premier of New South Wales state where Sydney is located, calling the bystander "a genuine hero".

Sunday's shootings were the most serious of a string of anti-Semitic attacks on synagogues, buildings and cars in Australia since the beginning of Israel's war in Gaza in October 2023.

World leaders expressed condolences. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi condemned the "ghastly terrorist attack" and offered his condolences to the families who lost their loved ones.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said that the attack on Jewish gathering "sickening" and that "the United Kingdom will always stand with Australia and the Jewish community."

Nitin Nabin named new BJP working president

The Prime Minister wrote in a post on X, "Shri Nitin Nabin Ji has distinguished himself as a hard-working *karyakarta* [worker]. He is a young and industrious leader with rich organisational experience and has an impressive record as MLA as well as Minister in Bihar for multiple terms. He has diligently worked to fulfil people's aspirations. I am confident that his energy and dedication will strengthen our Party in times to come. Congratulations to him on becoming the BJP National Working President."

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and the Home Minister echoed these sentiments, and called Mr. Nabin to congratulate him.

Mr. Nabin has been associated with the BJP for the past two decades, serving for seven years as the president of the Bihar unit of the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha and later as its national general secretary. He won his first Assembly election in 2006 from Patna (West) and has since remained undefeated from Bankipore. He currently holds the portfolios of Law and Justice, Urban Development and Housing. He served as the Road Construction Minister between 2021 and 2022.

BJP sources said the choice of Mr. Nabin reflected the party's desire for a generational shift in its leadership. "Apart from his youth, his deep involvement with the BJP – from its youth wing, the BJYM, to active roles in State-level politics – and his appointment as the co-in-charge of Assembly polls in Chhattisgarh in 2023, when the BJP pulled off a decisive victory, weighed heavily in his favour," another source said.

Police get 14-day custody of Messi event organiser

State-appointed inquiry panel begins its on-site assessment at Kolkata stadium, examining crowd management, access control and security arrangements following vandalism by disappointed fans

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

A Kolkata court on Sunday remanded the main organiser of the Lionel Messi event at the Salt Lake Stadium here in police custody for 14 days.

The Bidhannagar City Police had on Saturday arrested Satadru Dutta, hours after football fans vandalised the stadium following the Argentine star's exit from the venue.

Fans were upset that despite buying tickets at a high price, they were unable to catch a glimpse of Mr. Messi, as organisers surrounded the football legend. When Mr. Dutta was produced in court, some people raised slogans calling him a "thief".

Stadium stir: Satadru Dutta, the prime organiser of the Lionel Messi football event at Salt Lake Stadium, being brought to Bidhannagar court, in Kolkata, on Sunday. PTI

Panel visit

Members of the three-member inquiry committee set up by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to probe the factors that led to the vandalism visited the stadium on Sunday.

Justice Asim Kumar Roy (retd). is the chairperson of the committee. Chief Secretary Manoj Pant and Home Secretary Nandini Chakraborty are the other members.

"Don't make any assumptions now. We are actively investigating all aspects. We have taken notes of everything we saw. Our report will mention everything," Justice Roy told presspersons.

Asked who was responsible for the chaos at the stadium, Justice Roy said, "At the moment, the investigation is in the initial stage. Therefore, I cannot say anything right now."

Mr. Pant said the inquiry committee looked into the condition of the stadium on the first day of investigation.

"We will go into more aspects and speak to everyone concerned. All procedures of conducting an inquiry will be complied with," Mr. Pant added.

West Bengal Governor C.V. Ananda Bose also visited the stadium. The Governor had tried to visit the venue on Saturday but was denied entry.

Speaking to presspersons, the Governor said the events on Saturdayshould be an eye-opener for everyone.

"I will also be submitting my report to the Government of India," the Governor said. Mr. Bose said that he was not invited to the event by the organisers.

Leader of the Opposition Suvendu Adhikari later addressed a press conference and said that the State's Sports Minister Aroop Biswas and Fire Minister Sujit Bose should not only be suspended, but also arrested for the fiasco.

Mr. Adhikari said the first information report (FIR) lodged in the case provides an escape route to the accused. He pointed out that the FIR was "full of mistakes" and Mr. Dutta was named as the sole accused.

"This FIR has been lodged to save Ministers and others within the Trinamool," the BJP leader said, adding that the investigation in the case should be taken away from the State police.

CBI chargesheet names 17 persons, 58 firms for cyberfraud

Devesh K. Pandey
NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has filed a chargesheet against 17 accused individuals, including four Chinese nationals, and 58 companies after unearthing a large and well-organised transnational cyberfraud network operating across multiple States in India.

The agency has identified the foreign handlers as Zou Yi, Huan Liu, Weijian Liu, and Guanhua Wang, at whose instance shell companies were incorporated in India from 2020.

The breakthrough came with the arrest of three key Indian accused in October 2025. The agency found that a single, coordinated syndicate had created extensive digital and financial infrastructure to defraud thousands of unsuspecting citizens through misleading loan apps, fake investment schemes, Ponzi and MLM models, bogus part-time job offers, and fraudulent online gaming platforms.

The case was registered based on inputs received from the Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre under the Union Home Ministry, which indicated that large numbers of citizens were being cheated through online investment and employment schemes.

The breakthrough came in October 2025 with the arrest of three key Indian accused. PTI

"Though initially appearing as isolated complaints, a detailed analysis by the CBI revealed striking similarities in the applications used, fund-flow patterns, payment gateways, and digital footprints, pointing towards a common organised conspiracy," the agency said.

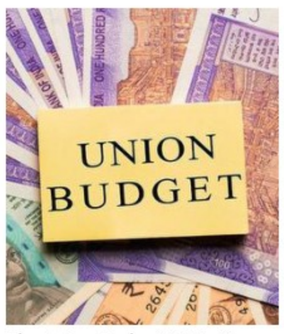
The CBI alleged that the cybercriminals adopted a highly layered and technology-driven modus operandi, involving the use of Google advertisements, bulk SMS campaigns, SIM-box-based messaging systems, cloud infrastructure, fintech platforms, and multiple mule bank accounts.

During the probe, the CBI unearthed a network of 111 shell companies incorporated using dummy directors, forged or misleading documents, fake addresses, and false statements of business objectives.

CII proposes reforms to spur investment-led growth in upcoming Union Budget

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Industry lobby Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) on Saturday proposed a comprehensive set of reforms for the forthcoming Union Budget 2026-27 to drive sustained investment growth across public, private, and foreign investments and to maintain India's momentum as one of the world's fastest-growing major economies.



The Union Budget 2026–27 must balance stability and growth, said the CII chief.

The CII suggested increasing Central capital expenditure by 12% and capex support to States by 10% in FY27; launching a ₹150 lakh crore National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) 2.0 for 2026-32; offering incremental tax credits or compliance relaxations for firms achieving significant new investment, production; and establishing an NRI Investment Promotion Fund. It also called for reinstating accelerated depreciation benefits to further incentivise fresh capital expenditure and technology upgrades, particularly for MSMEs and manufacturing industries, provided the measure is structured to stimulate modernisation without triggering Minimum Alternate Tax (MAT) obligations.

Besides, the CII urged strengthening the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) by forming a Sovereign Investment Strategy Council (SIFC) to align investments with national priorities.

According to the CII, reinforcing fiscal stability through an economic-cycle-based public debt framework, in place of inflexible annual deficit rules, would enhance resilience.

"The forthcoming Union Budget 2026-27 has to serve the dual role of stabiliser and growth enabler, and promoting investments will be one of the most critical components in this regard," CII Director-General Chandrajit Banerjee said.

Bolstering public investment remains essential, the CII said, noting that public capital expenditure has been a key driver of India's post-pandemic recovery.

President rejects mercy plea of man convicted of rape, murder of two-year-old girl

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu has rejected the mercy petition of Ravi Ashok Ghumare, who was convicted of kidnapping, raping, and killing a two-year-old girl in Maharashtra in 2012, officials said on Sunday.

This is the third mercy plea rejected by the President since she assumed office on July 25, 2022. According to the status of mercy petitions disclosed by the Rashtrapati Bhavan, Ghumare's plea was rejected on November 6.

Surpassed limits

The Supreme Court, on October 3, 2019, affirmed the death sentence awarded to Ghumare, saying that he had no control over his "carnal desires" and had surpassed all natural, social and legal limits just to satiate his sexual hunger.

Droupadi Murmu

In its verdict, a three-judge Bench comprising Justice Surya Kant (now Chief Justice of India), by a majority verdict of 2:1, said the man had "ruthlessly finished" a life which was yet to bloom.

"Having said that, it may be seen that the victim was barely a two-year-old baby whom the appellant (Ravi) kidnapped and apparently kept on assaulting for over four to five hours till she breathed her last."

"The appellant, who had no control over his carnal desires, surpassed all natural, social and legal limits just to satiate his sexual hunger,"Justice Surya Kant had said, while writing the verdict for himself and (now retired) Justice Rohinton Fali Nariman.

"It's a case where trust has been betrayed, and social values are impaired," the verdict said.

According to the prosecution, the incident took place on March 6, 2012, in Indiranagar locality of Maharashtra's Jalna city. Ghumare had lured the victim with a chocolate.

The trial court had convicted him and awarded the death penalty on September 16, 2015.

2 held in Assam over death of 21 workers in Arunachal

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

The police in eastern Assam's Tinsukia district arrested two men on charges of supplying labourers illegally to Arunachal Pradesh, 21 of whom were killed in a road accident on December 8.

Officials said Md Sirajul Ahmed, 36, and Sairuddin Ali, 27, were arrested for sending the labourers from Tinsukia's Gelapukhuri Tea Estate to Anjaw district in Arunachal Pradesh. They were packed off in a truck, which fell into a 200-metre gorge before reaching Chaglagam, their destination.

There were 22 people, including the driver, on the truck. One of them survived to inform the authorities in Chaglagam on December 10.

Rescue teams in Arunachal Pradesh recovered the bodies of 20 labourers by Sunday. The search for the remaining worker, believed dead, continued.

Protocols violated

Tinsukia's Senior Superintendent of Police, Mayank Kumar Jha, told journalists that mandatory protocols were violated while transporting the workers to Arunachal Pradesh. "During the investigation, we found that the labourers were moved without proper documentation or safety measures," he said.

A case was registered against the duo, both from Tinsukia district's Balupara Gaon, under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. These included section 143(3) dealing with human trafficking and section 105 (culpable homicide). Mr. Jha said a Special Investigation Team has been constituted to probe the "entire chain" of the case.

On Saturday evening, the bodies of six labourers were cremated at the Gelapukhuri Tea Estate, after being received by district authorities in the presence of Minister Bimal Borah.

Indian Navy to commission second MH-60R helicopter squadron in Goa

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Indian Navy will commission its second MH-60R helicopter squadron, INAS 335 (Ospreys), on December 17 at INS Hansa in Goa, in the presence of the Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi.

The event will mark a significant milestone in the Navy's ongoing drive towards modernisation and capability enhancement.

The Indian Navy said that equipped with advanced weapons, sensors, and a state-of-the-art avionics suite, the MH-60R is a versatile multi-role platform capable of effectively addressing both conventional and asymmetric threats. The helicopter has been fully integrated with fleet operations and has already demonstrated its operational effectiveness on several occasions.

The Navy had commissioned its first squadron of the multi-role MH-60R helicopters on March 6 last year at Kochi. FILE PHOTO

The commissioning of INAS 335 will provide a major boost to the Indian Navy's integral aviation capabilities, significantly enhancing its operational readiness. The induction of the MH-60R will further strengthen India's blue-water capabilities by extending the Navy's operational reach and enabling sustained naval operations .

Deployment of the Seahawk helicopters in the Indian Ocean Region will reinforce the Indian Navy's maritime presence and deter potential threats.

The Indian Navy had commissioned its first squadron of the multi-role MH-60R helicopters on March 6 last year at Kochi, marking the beginning of a new chapter in its maritime aviation capability.

Jaishankar meets his U.K., European counterparts

Press Trust of India
DUBAI

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has met with his counterparts from Europe, the U.K., and Egypt on the sidelines of a high-level-summit in the United Arab Emirates.

In a social media post on Saturday, Mr. Jaishankar said "it was great to be" with Luxembourg's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Xavier Bettel, Poland's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski, and Latvia's Foreign Minister Baiba Braze.

Congress warns ECs, threatens strict action over 'vote theft'

The party showcases nearly six crore signatures as part of its campaign against vote *chori*; senior leaders allege that vote theft is an attack on Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's Constitution, and accuse the BJP-RSS of standing with untruth and power

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge with party leaders Rahul Gandhi, Sonia Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, and others during the party's '*vote chor, gaddi chhod*' rally in New Delhi on Sunday. PTI

In a no-holds-barred attack on the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Election Commission, the Congress on Sunday held a massive public rally at Delhi's Ramlila ground in which party chief Mallikarjun Kharge said those indulging in alleged vote *chori* (theft) are "*gaddars*" (traitors) and need to be removed from power.

Former party chief Rahul Gandhi said vote theft was in the BJP's DNA but the Congress would work with truth and non-violence to remove the Narendra Modi government, a path shown by Mahatma Gandhi.

"This fight is between '*satya*' and '*asatya*' [truth and untruth]. We will stand behind '*satya*' and will remove [Prime Minister] Narendra Modi, [Home Minister] Amit Shah and the RSS government from the country. They have '*satta*' [power] and they indulge in 'vote *chori*'," Mr. Gandhi said.

The party showcased nearly six crore signatures it gathered as part of its campaign against vote *chori* and these would be submitted to the President.

Mr. Kharge said the ideology of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat or RSS founder M.S. Golwalkar and *Manusmriti* would destroy the country, and only the ideology of the Congress could save it. He accused the BJP-RSS of trying to "finish off the Constitution and enslave the poor in the name of Hindutva".

"These [BJP] people are *gaddars*. If you want to protect yourself, remove these *gaddars*. For that purpose, Rahul Gandhi walked throughout the country. BJP people are *dramebaaz*, they only believe in their own propaganda," the Congress chief said.

A massive turnout of Congress workers from across the country marked the party's mega rally against alleged "*vote chori*", with chants of "*vote chor, gaddi chhod*" echoing across the venue.

Congress Parliamentary Party Chairperson Sonia Gandhi, several senior party leaders, and the Chief Ministers of Karnataka, Telangana and Himachal Pradesh – Siddaramaiah, Revanth Reddy and Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu – were present at the rally.

Mr. Gandhi named Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi, alleging that they were working in favour of the BJP and standing with untruth. He alleged that "vote *chori*" was not merely theft of votes but an attack on Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's Constitution.

Warns of action

Recalling that the Prime Minister brought a new law granting "immunity" to the Election Commission, Mr. Gandhi warned, "We are telling you [Election Commissioners] clearly that this law is to protect you and we will change this law retroactively and will take strict action against you."

Referring to Mr. Modi's victory claims, Mr. Kharge said, "We lost at many places, but still our party and our ideology are alive. If Modi loses once, there will be no trace of him after that," and urged people to strengthen the Congress's struggle for the people.

Priyanka Gandhi dares the BJP to contest a fair election using ballot paper

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra speaking at the Ramlila Maidan in Delhi on Sunday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Sunday challenged the BJP to contest and win a "fair election" conducted through ballot papers, and said that the Election Commissioners (ECs) would have to answer the nation one day as to how they "conspired" to take away people's voting rights.

Addressing the '*Vote Chor, Gaddi Chhod*' rally at Ramlila grounds, Ms. Vadra also criticised the Narendra Modi government's policies, saying the government has failed on all fronts.

She claimed that the growing unemployment rate has been driving the youth towards substance abuse and betting apps.

"The youth of the country are grappling with price rise, unemployment, and exam paper leaks, and there is no one to help them. They are turning to substance abuse and spending the entire day on betting apps. Who is running these betting apps? According to sources, an individual in the PMO is involved in the betting scam. Is this being discussed in the House," she asked.

As the party intensified its campaign against alleged "vote theft", Ms. Vadra named Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi as people who were "attacking" India's democracy.

"For the first time in history, the entire Opposition is stating that they don't trust the EC and the polls are not being conducted properly. From announcement of polls, voters list, model code of conduct, campaign, polling, counting, EVMs and results, every step has been made suspicious by them (election commissioners)," she said.

"I challenge. The BJP should contest a fair election on the ballot paper once. They will never be able to win, and the BJP also knows this fact," she added.

Referring to the special intensive revision of electoral rolls in Bihar, Ms. Vadra said, "In Bihar, 65 lakh votes were removed, and even if you set aside this evidence, during the model code of conduct in Bihar, they sent ₹10,000 to people's bank accounts with the EC looking the other way. If this is not vote theft, then what is?"

States asked to send women, SC and ST officers for key posts on Central deputation

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The Centre has asked States to nominate women officers and those from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes for appointment in key posts on Central deputation so that adequate representation can be provided to them.

In a communique issued to the Chief Secretaries of all State governments, the Personnel Ministry sought nominations of only those officers who are not likely to be recalled by them on the grounds of promotions for at least two years.

The sponsored officers are to be appointed on deputation to the posts under the Central Staffing Scheme and to the posts of Chief Vigilance Officers in Central Public Sector Enterprises and other Central government organisations.

"Sufficient names of women and SC and ST officers may be sponsored so that adequate representation can be provided to them," read the communique dated December 10.

It said that such movement of officers from the States to the Centre is crucial for building up the capabilities and contributing towards developing State perspectives in the Government of India or national perspective in the State at the decision-making levels.

'Never allowed activities inimical to Bangladesh'

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

The Ministry of External Affairs on Sunday said forces that are "inimical" to the people of Bangladesh have never found foothold in the territory of India.

The response came soon after the neighbouring country alleged that "incendiary" remarks by deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina – who is currently based in India – have been inciting her supporters to launch "terrorist" attacks to "thwart" the upcoming election.

"India has never allowed its territory to be used for activities inimical to the interests of the friendly people of Bangladesh. We expect that the interim Government of Bangladesh will take all necessary measures for ensuring internal law and order, including for the purpose of holding peaceful elections," said the Ministry of External Affairs.

Earlier, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) of Bangladesh summoned Indian High Commissioner Pranay Verma and reiterated its demand for "expeditious extradition" of Ms. Hasina, who has been in India since fleeing Dhaka on August 5, 2024. A press

Sheikh Hasina

note released by the Bangladesh MoFA said the officials "drew the attention" of the Indian envoy to "anti-Bangladesh activities by fugitive Awami League members staying in India".

Bangladesh started demanding the repatriation of Ms. Hasina since the fall of her government and the demand became a formal request following the death sentence that Ms. Hasina and the former Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal received from the International Crimes Tribunal. Sunday's remarks from Bangladesh's MoFA accused Ms. Hasina of making "incendiary statements calling upon her supporters to engage in terrorist activities in Bangladesh, aiming to thwart the upcoming parliamentary elections".

The statement acquires a sharp focus as it came three days after a right-wing youth leader, Sharif Osman Hadi, was shot and critically injured in Dhaka. Subsequently, authorities in Dhaka have zeroed in on Faisal Karim Masud, a part-owner of a local IT firm, for his alleged involvement to assassinate Mr. Hadi. The Bangladesh MoFA in its statement said, "The Ministry further sought India's cooperation in preventing the escape to India of the suspects involved in the recent attempted assassination of Sharif Osman Hadi and, in case they manage to enter Indian territory, to ensure their immediate apprehension and extradition to Bangladesh."

Pankaj Chaudhary at the helm as BJP faces organisational challenges in U.P.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Nistula Hebbar
NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party's newly elected head of the Uttar Pradesh unit, Union Minister Pankaj Chaudhary, may have come to the job after a long process of consultation, but was likely signalled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in July 2023 itself as a choice seemingly aimed at combating the organisational challenges faced by the Uttar Pradesh BJP, with Assembly elections in 2027.

His unanimous election was formally announced on Sunday by Union Minister Piyush Goyal at the party's State headquarters.

It was on July 7, 2023, that the Prime Minister made an unannounced visit to Mr. Chaudhary's residence in Harivansh Gali. The visit made news, and tea leaves were read of greater prominence coming Mr. Chaudhary's way. In 2024, when he was made Minister of State, the impromptu visit was said to have fructified, then forgotten. Not so in the Prime Minister's mind, it seems, as after extensive floating of names, Mr. Modi has selected Mr. Chaudhary for the crucial role.

Pankaj Chaudhary

Mr. Chaudhary thus finds himself at the helm of affairs of a party unit which has several challenges, and his affable persona, Other Backward Class identity, Poorvanchali location, and acceptability among both party workers and the Chief Minister are expected to address them.

Internal rift

Since the Assembly election of 2022, the differences within the BJP between the party organisation and the State government have been obvious. During the 2022 poll, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, considered independent of the BJP's organisational structure because of the influence of his own outfit, the Hindu Yuva Vahini, and the historic appeal of the Gorakhnath Peeth, was treading his own line.

Then Uttar Pradesh election in-charge, Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, had his hands full calming the tempers of party workers who were reluctant to help elect the party to power when their voices weren't heard at the top levels of the State government. That is an issue that persists, and Mr. Chaudhary's first order of business would have to be to establish coordination between the State government and the party organisation.

The 2024 Lok Sabha election saw the BJP lose its dominant position. This was largely attributed to OBC and Scheduled Caste voters drifting to the Samajwadi Party and the Congress, along with the decline of the Bahujan Samaj Party, especially in eastern Uttar Pradesh. Mr. Chaudhary, a Kurmi and a seven-time MP from Maharajganj in northeastern Uttar Pradesh, is expected to shore up support in this critical area.

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS-TIRUPATI
S.V. GOSAMRAKSHANA SHALA — e-TENDER NOTICE

NIT No. TTD-30/27/2025-SV GOSHALA, Dt. 12 -12-2025.
e-Tenders are invited for management of cattle at SVIC, Palamaner on contract mode (activity based). Tender documents can be downloaded by login to **https://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in** and select on current tenders and click on more and then select "Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams at department field and S.V Gosamrakshana Shala Dairy Farm in the circle / Division field and click on search button." **Download Start 15-12-2025 From 10.30 AM and Last date for submission of tender is 26-12-2025 up to 11.00 AM.** For further details contact Phone No.:**0877 - 2264570.**
TTD-40021/10/2025-PRO SEC (Adv.No.319) Date:12-12-2025 — **EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Wheels India Limited
Regd Office : 21, Patullos Road, Chennai – 600 002
CIN : L35921TN1960PLC004175
Phone : 044-2623 4300; Fax : 044-26257121
Website : www.wheelsindia.com
Invites offers from interested parties for purchase of Mild Steel scrap items, for the two month period JAN - FEB 2026.
Details of the items available for disposal and tender terms and conditions can be had from the Company on written request.
Sealed offers can be submitted to the **Sr. Vice President (Supply Chain),** Wheels India Limited, Padi, Chennai - 600 050 **to reach on or before 30th DECEMBER 2025.**

Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority,Pune
E-Tender Notice No. 59 for FY 2025-26
PMRDA invites proposals through e-tendering for "Appointment of an Authority's Engineer (Project Management Consultant) for construction of multiple lanes divided carriageway, cement concrete road with footpaths from existing twin bridges (old stone arch bridge & RCC bridge on MDR 161) to NH 548 D (Talegaon -Chakan-Shikrapur Road) (Dehu - Yelwadi Road) Tal Maval, Dist - Pune, Maharashtra."
The Tender document for this work can be downloaded from the website: https://mahatenders.gov.in/ from 19th December, 2025 at 17.00 Hrs. onwards. Last date for submission of the proposal is 26th December, 2025 upto 17.00 Hrs. The changes if any can be available on https://mahatenders.gov.in/
This Tender Notice can also be seen on PMRDA website.
-sd-
Executive Engineer,
Engineering Division 1
Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority, Pune

BANGALORE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED
(Wholly Owned by Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
CIN - U04010KA2002SGC030438
NOTIFICATION INVITING TENDER (NIT)
(Through KPP Portal)
BESCOM invites tender for the following work through KPP Portal:
Tender Enquiry No. BESCOM/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT732 - Replacement of existing LT Overhead lines into LT AB cable in various hazardous locations, schools & colleges premises, theft prone and densely populated areas in the aspect of safety in 15 feeders of Tiptur Subdivision of Tiptur Division, BESCOM on Percentage Quoting Basis.
Availability of Bid documents : 18.12.2025 @ 15:00 Hrs onwards. **Last date for bid submission :** 19.01.2026 @ 15:00 Hrs. **Opening of Technical Bids :** 20.01.2026 @ 15:15 Hrs. **Pre-Bid meeting :** 30.12.2025 @ 11:00 Hrs. **Last date for submission of Queries:** 29.12.2025 before 17:00 Hrs. **Venue :** Conference hall, 3rd Floor, BELAKU BHAVANA, Corporate office, BESCOM, K. R Circle, Bangalore- 560 001.
The bid documents can be downloaded and necessary assistance can be obtained through the e-procurement portal from the website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** E-procurement Help Desk: Phone No: **+91-8046010000 +91-8068948777** E-mail: **support@eprochelpdesk.com** Aspiring bidders needs to be registered on e-procurement portal. Bidders can take the assistance from the e-procurement during working hours.
Sd/-
Chief General Manager (Ele.,),
Projects, BESCOM.
cgmproject.bescom@gmail.com
For electricity related complaints call : 1912
Download BESCOM Mithra Mobile APP

Now reading:
Journalism that reports to the people, not to power.
THE HINDU
Since 1878
Written by JOURNALISTS
Print | Web | App

INBRIEF

Nauradehi tiger reserve to be third cheetah habitat in M.P.

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav has said that Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve will become the new home for cheetahs in the State before the monsoon next year, following the successful translocation of the big cats from Africa to Kuno National Park (KNP). The State Cabinet has given in-principle approval to develop the Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve, located at Nauradehi in Sagar district, as the third habitat in the State for the cheetahs. "We have only released three cheetahs in the Gandhi Sagar Tiger Reserve. There could be 50," Mr. Yadav said. He said his government is also working to translocate other wildlife species to the State.

CPI(M) MP objects to Rijiju's post featuring RS members

CPI(M) Rajya Sabha member V. Sivadasan has written to Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju expressing "serious concern" over a recent social media post in which the Minister shared a photograph and video of Rajya Sabha MPs heading to the Prime Minister's residence, captioned "NDA family". In his letter, Mr. Sivadasan pointed out that the post included nominated members Sudha Murty and P.T. Usha, who were appointed under Article 80(1)(a) of the Constitution. "Describing them as part of the 'NDA family' is factually incorrect and politically misleading," he wrote. The CPI(M) leader said such representation undermines the non-partisan character of their nomination.

Top officials shifted after Bilaspur accident report

Investigation revealed that the loco pilot was 'unfit' to run the train as he failed the mandatory aptitude test; CRS report says that the train accident occurred due to an 'error in train working'

S. Vijay Kumar
CHENNAI

The Railway Ministry has transferred the Principal Chief Electrical Engineer of South East Central Railway (SECR), Rajiv Kumar Barnwal, and the Divisional Railway Manager, Bilaspur, Rajmal Khoiwal, in the aftermath of the Bilaspur train accident.

The transfers came hours after the report of the Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS), Brijesh Kumar Mishra, who investigated the circumstances that led to the tragic accident, was published in *The Hindu* on December 11, 2025.

The accident took place on November 4, 2025, when a Mainline Electrical Multiple Unit (MEMU) train crossed the signal in danger and collided with a stationary goods train, leaving 12 people dead and 19 injured near Bilaspur in Chhattisgarh.

In his report submitted to the Railway Board, Mr. Mishra said the loco pilot of the commuter train, who also died in the collision, had failed in the mandatory 'aptitude' test and was therefore not fit to operate the service.

A Mainline Electrical Multiple Unit train crossed the signal and collided with a stationary goods train in Bilaspur on November 4. PTI

The CRS also recommended that only loco pilots who had passed the aptitude test should be deployed to operate MEMU services. He said the aptitude test assessed intelligence, memory, reaction time, and personality traits, and warned that engaging loco pilots who had failed the test would compromise operational safety.

Threat to safety

"Deploying loco pilots on MEMU services who have failed to perform against the above parameters will certainly hamper timely decision-making and reaction time during train operations," Mr. Mishra said in his report.

In SECR, of the 142 loco pilots required to operate MEMU services, only 102 had cleared the mandatory aptitude test, leaving a shortfall of 40. The CRS recommended that the Railway Board arrange additional manpower to address the deficit.

Mr. Mishra flagged concerns over Signal Passed At Danger (SPAD) incidents. As many as 33 SPAD cases were reported in 2024-25, while six such incidents were recorded in the first two months of 2025-26. He recommended that assistant loco pilots be instructed to apply emergency brakes if a loco pilot crossed a signal at 'red' or exceeded prescribed speeds after passing a 'yellow' signal, to help contain SPAD occurrences.

Blood alcohol levels

Referring to the Indian Railway Medical Manual, Mr. Mishra said only a "zero" blood alcohol level was acceptable.

However, during the inquiry, the Principal Chief Medical Director of the SECR stated that blood alcohol levels of up to 10 mg/dl were being treated as negative, citing metabolic factors that could cause such readings. In view of this, the CRS recommended that Indian Railways review the acceptable blood alcohol limits.

He further recommended that in the event of the death of any crew member involved in an accident, the railways should ensure that blood alcohol content is included in the post-mortem report to ascertain intoxication levels.

Mr. Mishra concluded the Bilaspur train accident occurred due to an "error in train working".

No link between COVID vaccines and sudden deaths: study

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

A one-year autopsy-based observational study conducted at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi, has found no evidence of a causal link between COVID-19 vaccination and sudden deaths among young adults, reaffirming the safety of COVID vaccines.

The study noted that sudden deaths among young adults remain a significant public health concern, and call for targeted interventions. It found that underlying coronary artery disease (CAD) continues to be the leading cause of sudden death in this age group, while respiratory and unexplained deaths require further investigation.

Titled "Burden of sudden death in young adults: a one-year observational study at a tertiary care centre in India", the research has been published in the *Indian Journal of Medical Research*, the flagship journal of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

The study examined young adults aged 18 to 45 over a one-year period and found no statistically significant association between COVID-19 vaccination status and sudden deaths.

Cardiovascular causes accounted for the majority of deaths, followed by respiratory and other non-cardiac conditions.

The history of COVID-19 illness and vaccination status was comparable across younger and older age groups.

Comparative analysis was performed between sudden death in young adults (18-45) and older adults (46-65). A total of 2,214 cases were received at the forensic mortuary during the study period, in which cases meeting the criteria of sudden death were 18. Among the total sudden deaths, sudden death in young (18-45) accounted for 57.2% (103) and sudden death in old (46-65) accounted for 42.8% (77).

The study pointed out that the higher incidence of young CAD-related deaths observed in the study is concerning and remains under-documented in the Indian context.

Underlying conditions

Health experts reiterated that sudden deaths in young individuals are often related to underlying medical conditions, especially cardiovascular diseases, and require focused public health interventions.

'Early gestational diabetes affects about one in five pregnant women'

Ramya Kannan
CHENNAI

A study conducted at seven antenatal clinics with over 3,000 women, found that early gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) affects about one in five pregnant women, and also indicates a distinct higher risk for developing diabetes later in life, compared with GDM contracted later in pregnancy.

The results of the STRiDE study, conducted among 2,700-odd pregnant women who came to clinics in Chennai, Hyderabad, and Puducherry, were published in a recent edition of *Diabetes Research and Clinical Practice*. They showed that while the rates of both early and late GDM were climbing steadily, it was 21.5% for the former and 19.5% for the latter. Women were classified as having early GDM if they had a fasting blood sugar of 92-125 mg/dl, and late GDM if the reading was under 92 mg/dl.

India's GDM burden is three to four times higher than Western countries.

GDM is defined as glucose intolerance first diagnosed during pregnancy and affects approximately 14% of pregnancies worldwide. It is usually between 24 and 28 weeks – as late GDM. When diagnosed before 20 weeks, it is called early GDM. This study aimed to assess the prevalence and risk factors of early GDM compared with late GDM in Asian Indian women.

The aim of the STRiDE study was to develop a risk scoring system to predict late GDM in early pregnancy itself. An early screening was done before 16 weeks of pregnancy using fasting plasma glucose (FPG) and HbA1c, the three-month average. If they had higher sugar levels, they were tested once again at 24-28 weeks.

The study was a collaboration between research institutions in India, Australia, Kuwait, and the Great Britain. Women with early GDM had higher early-pregnancy weight, BMI, waist circumference, blood pressure, HbA1c, and family history of GDM. Late GDM was more strongly associated with a family history of diabetes.

"It is clear that further studies are needed," explains V. Mohan, an author of the paper, and chairman of the Madras Diabetes Research Foundation, Chennai, one of the collaborating institutions.

"In another ICMR study among 1,000 women, early GDM was diagnosed in 19.2% and late GDM, in 23.4%; the results are consistent. We need to evaluate when best to do a test for GDM, what test would be ideal, and what treatment methodologies would improve outcomes and reduce side effects even for the foetus. In the West, only women with a family history are screened, but in India where GDM is nearly three to four times what is seen there, we need to be prepared" he said.

Bill for overhaul of higher education regulatory framework likely soon

Abhinay Lakshman
NEW DELHI

In its new Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill, 2025, set to be introduced in Parliament this Winter Session, the Union government has proposed an "overhaul of the regulatory framework" of higher education in India by establishing a 12-member Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan (VBSA) umbrella commission, under which separate regulatory (*viniyaman*), accreditation (*gunvatta*), and standards (*manak*) councils will operate.

This Bill, listed in the Lok Sabha bulletin for the Winter Session, seeks to subsume the functions of the University Grants Commission (UGC), the All India Council for Technical Education, and the National Council for Teachers' Education.

The VBSA will subsume the powers of UGC and other regulatory bodies.

It further proposes that the UGC's grants-disbursal function be performed "through mechanisms devised by the Ministry of Education".

Citing its pursuit of the National Education Policy, 2020, the government, in the Statement of Objects and Reasons, said the Bill would "enable and empower universities and other higher educational institutions to achieve excellence in teaching, learning, research and innovation, as an outcome of better co-ordination and determination of standards in institutions for higher education or research and scientific and technical institutions".

In this Bill, the government has provided for the creation of the Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan (VBSA), which will consist of 12 members. The Viksit Bharat Viniyaman Parishad (regulatory), the Viksit Bharat Gunvatta Parishad (accreditation), and the Viksit Bharat Manak Parishad (standards) will operate under this, with up to 14 members each.

The law is proposed to be applicable to all Central and State universities, colleges, and higher education institutions, including those for technical education, teacher education, architects' education, institutions of national importance, and institutes of eminence. It has exempted professional programmes in disciplines such as medicine, dentistry, law, pharmacology, nursing, and veterinary sciences.

Foreign universities

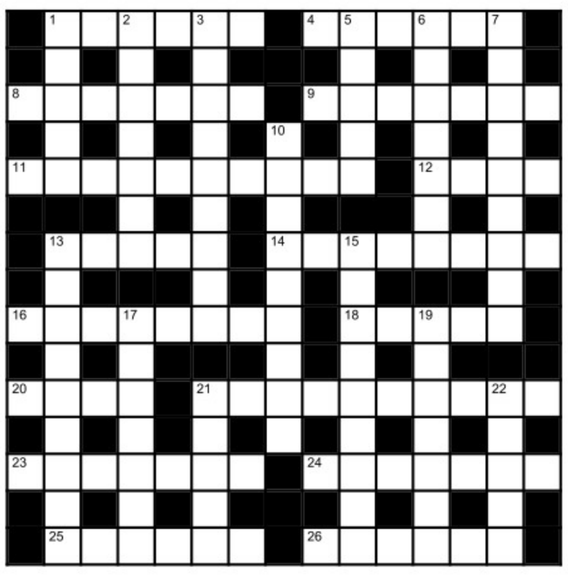
While the Bill gives the Accreditation Council a mandate to develop an "outcome-based institutional accreditation framework", it has mandated the Regulatory Council to set standards for Centre-approved foreign universities to operate in India, "facilitate high-performing universities" to set up campuses abroad, and develop a "coherent policy to prevent commercialisation of higher education", among others.

TH CROSSWORD + 14665

(set by Gridzilla)

Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at *https://crossword.thehindu.com*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Feeling a bit satisfied after extremely short flight (6)
4 A short time to have lunch out (4,2)
8 Taking spoiled salami, one ultimately gets some discomfort (7)
9 Henry delivered hash or heroin in metal container? (4,3)
11 Visiting hot adult site, Mark gets aroused (10)
12 Small drink, say, for skipper (4)
13 Worm on top of sunflower plant (5)
14 "Australia: The best place" - A Netflix feature (8)
16 John sat playing on account of these sets of cards (8)
18 Cryptic clue about primarily nice relative (5)
20 Went in haste, covering head (4)
21 Radiohead's first hit single's unusually creepy (10)
23 Order servant to check room (7)
24 Right away, rations drinks (7)
25 Portion of crab soup in ceramic cups (6)
26 Catches fish with outdated lures? (6)

Down

1 Taking public transport around is clever (5)
2 Feared gangster's carrying a gun (7)
3 New 'Listerine Strong' (9)
5 In the East End, the masses misbehaved (5)
6 No set exercises? (5,2)
7 Result: After losing opener, entire team's out! (9)
10 Vessel with crew on board starts to head into port (9)
13 A UFO with small steps? Cool! (9)
15 Land in Amsterdam perhaps, says Spooner (5,4)
17 A sign board above shows where to find a six-pack (7)
19 Cheerful guy is always laughing basically (7)
21 Incident is investigated, as per report (5)
22 Near-perfect ratings possibly worsening after partial review? (5)

SUDOKU

		5				7	9	
				5			4	
7					6			1
	4	8	3				1	
6	7		5		4		2	9
	5				1	4	7	
5			7					3
	9			3				
	8	7				9		

No.SS6731 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★☆☆☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

3	5	9	4	8	1	7	6	2
7	2	8	5	6	9	3	4	1
4	1	6	2	3	7	8	9	5
1	7	4	3	9	5	6	2	8
5	8	3	7	2	6	4	1	9
9	6	2	1	4	8	5	3	7
2	9	7	6	5	3	1	8	4
6	4	5	8	1	2	9	7	3
8	3	1	9	7	4	2	5	6

FAITH

Be the better son

Tiruvalluvar says, "A man's riches are his children; their riches are the fruit of their actions." One of the practical dilemmas faced by children of aged parents in Kali Yuga is the question of responsibility and the willingness to care for them. Our scriptures are very clear on what benefits one reaps when one truly cares for one's own parents, said B. Damodhara Deekshithar.

A old man sent word to his four sons to come visit him as he was unable to travel. It soon became clear that the father was bedridden and needed to be cared for round the clock. The first son replied expressing his inability to relocate to the village. The second son responded saying he was in the middle of auditing and would be unable to take time off from work for a few months. The third son excused himself citing visa issues. All three offered to transfer a good amount to the father and offered to find a good caretaker through an agency. The fourth son too had issues at the workplace, and when his superiors refused to sanction leave, he chose to resign and relocate to his father's village with his wife and two sons. His approach was simple and straightforward: Money can be earned at any age, but one cannot say the same of one's father.

Our scriptures would say the youngest is the best son of them all, since he opted to serve his father personally. When the father apologised for troubling him thus, the son replied, "It is no trouble at all for me. You earned me, and I am your son. I am here to serve you." Scriptures say such a son need not go in search of Brahman, for God Himself will come to him and free him from the shackles of rebirths.

How we are conditioned to settle for less during a crisis

COVERNOTE

The past few months have felt like one long chain of crises, from cashless claims being suspended to hundreds of flights being cancelled

K Nitya Kalyani

Just last week, we discussed how insurance usually enters our thoughts only when a crisis strikes. Looking back, the past few months have felt like one long chain of crises, from cashless claims being suspended to a threatening series of cyclones.

The recent mass cancellation of Indigo flights is a stark example. Careers, weddings, official meetings – so many important moments were affected, seemingly because of one company's poor planning, whatever the reason may be.

My own experience was no different. A flight booked for a class reunion was cancelled, forcing me to scramble for an alternative option. I eventually reached my destination 16 hours late – long past midnight.

While the reunion itself was wonderful, the onward business trip I had planned for the next day collapsed because there were no alternate flights available once the airline cancelled.

But frustration isn't always limited to large crises; even routine situations can leave you feeling powerless. Recently, I booked a ticket but needed to change my travel date. Since I had selected a "no cancellation fee" option, I assumed I could simply cancel and rebook. Instead, I received only a small fraction of the fare as a refund and was informed that I had to file a claim with the insurance company to get the remainder, and the claim would be paid only if the cancellation was due to very specific reasons - like medical emergencies.

I paid extra for this feature, yet none of these conditions was explained at the time. And honestly, if a cancellation truly is due to a medical emergency, shouldn't the airline, out of basic fairness, offer a refund or rebooking without involving insurance?

The bottom line: the fine print taketh away.

Public communication from the airline during this crisis was slow, reactive, and often tone-deaf. While there was a great deal of talk about "full refunds," many travellers, myself included, still lost between at least ₹1,000 per cancelled ticket.

Tax justification

The justification was that taxes had already been passed on to the government and therefore could not be refunded. Anyone familiar with GST processes knows this is not necessarily true – remittance isn't instantaneous, and wrongly collected tax can be adjusted in subsequent filings.

Meanwhile, what about the real losses? Exorbitantly priced alternate flights, last-minute hotel bookings, missed onward flights and other travel bookings, lost business opportunities and job interviews, postponed milestone family events, and the stress endured by children, elderly passengers, and people with special needs. These inconveniences are not minor, and they deserve transparent and automatic – not patronising – compensation frameworks.

And one final irritation: airlines routinely deduct "convenience fees" during refunds – essentially charging us for booking tickets ourselves online. How convenient!

(The writer is a business journalist specialising in insurance & corporate history)

Send queries on personal finance and investing to the moneywise@thehindu.co.in ID. Our experts in personal finance will respond to select queries, but will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund, share or fixed deposit.

Impulse equation: Not all reactions are harmful, but they do not always translate into real investing. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

A behavioural lens on 'misvestment'

Copying the crowd may feel strategic, but it's often a pattern of 'misvestment'. Such a behaviour crystallises into investor archetypes, suggesting why same facts produce wildly different choices

INVESTMENT ILLUSION

Vaishali R. Venkat

Last week, my friend Sudha told me she had invested her bonus in a mid-cap stock. When I asked why she chose that company, she replied instantly: "My boss said it will become 10X in five years." No goal, no logic, no fundamentals, no analysis. Yet, she had placed her hard-earned money into something without knowing her own reason for doing so.

Beneath that confident answer lay a quieter truth: Sudha wasn't really investing, she was just reacting; and she is not alone. Many people react to fear, to familiar stories, to old myths, to trends, to hype, to social expectations, to the urge to please others or simply to someone else's conviction. Not all reactions are harmful, but they do not always translate into real investing.

'Misvestment' describes a pseudo-investment pattern, an action that feels like investing superficially, but is not grounded in understanding, analysis or intrinsic value. A misvestment taxonomy helps make sense of these subtle behavioural patterns and groups investors into archetypes based on the beliefs and tendencies behind their decisions.

Misvestment drains wealth quietly while giving the illusion of investing, so identifying your archetype gives you greater control over why and what you invest in and helps you avoid repeating the same mistakes. Let's dig deeper into the archetypes...

> Notvestors often confuse spending with investing. They make large purchases that feel like assets but are actually depreciating expenses

> Egovestors invest to feed their ego and status than value. Even if the fundamentals are weak, they choose options that sound prestigious

The Herdvestor

Herdvestors follow the crowd and invest by social imitation. They look at what friends, colleagues, relatives or online groups are doing and assume the crowd must know something they don't. A few repeated mentions of an investment idea or a shared excitement is often enough to push them into action. They aren't investing to create intrinsic value; in the name of investment, they simply 'misvest' by following the herd. Sudha's quick leap on her boss' 10X prophecy places her firmly in this camp of elegant imitators.

The Propvestor

Propvestors place enormous faith in real estate and they believe that real estate is the most reliable path to wealth creation. "Land, property always appreciates" is their mantra, even when reality paints a different picture. Appreciation becomes real only when you sell, and rent, the only steady return, tends to be low in India. The average gross residential rental yield in Indian cities hovers around 3-5%, even in high-demand markets. With such modest returns, Propvestors may not be growing their money in real terms because inflation quietly eats into whatever gains they expect.

The Egovestor

Egovestors invest to feed their ego and status, rather than value. Even if the fundamentals are weak, they choose options that sound prestigious or impressive. For instance, without checking the company's financials, they may chase high-profile IPOs just to boast that they "got an allotment". Or they might put money into a startup they barely understand because the title of "angel investor" appeals to them.

The Talevestor

Talevestors invest in narratives not numbers; they invest in stories not substance. A charismatic personality, a dramatic turnaround tale or any compelling story is enough to sway them. For instance, they buy land or property because a famous hero or sports star endorsed it. Talevestors also jump into ideas based on sweeping stories like "EV is the next boom", "AI will change the world" or "Crypto is the future".

The Mythvestor

Mythvestors make investment decisions based on long-held financial myths and inherited beliefs rather than facts. They follow ideas passed down by ancestors, culture or hearsay – gold is always gold; insurance is investment; older companies are safer; mutual funds are risky. These beliefs feel too familiar and comforting to question.

The Notvestor

Notvestors often confuse spending with investing, labelling big-ticket consumption as an investment. They make large purchases that feel like assets but are actually depreciating expenses. For instance, a friend of mine proudly described her twelve-lakh car as a one-time investment, unaware that its value began depreciating the moment it was driven out of the showroom. The weight of the purchase creates the illusion of investing, even though it adds no real value. The moment you recognise your archetype, misvestment loses its grip and real investment starts to take shape with clarity.

(The writer is an NISM & CRISIL-certified Wealth Manager and is certified in NISM's Research Analyst module)

Do we learn from our investment mistakes?

THINKINVESTOR

It is difficult to learn from past mistakes unless we create rules to moderate the biases we suffer from

Venkatesh Bangaruswamy

We all sometimes make poor investment decisions. But do we learn from our mistakes? Why then do we continually fall prey to a financial scam? Or invest in products that lure us with high returns despite realizing that such returns cannot be achieved? This week, we discuss why learning from past mistakes is not always easy.

Picture this. Your colleagues rave about a real estate development in your city. From your experience, you believe that the investment may not be optimal. But what if real estate prices in that area skyrocket and you did not invest? Your System 1 (the intuitive brain) is likely to rationalise that it is less painful to fail with the crowd! So, you invest along with your colleagues despite your System 2 (the deliberative brain) frowning on your decision. If the investment fails to generate the desired return, your System 1 will find ways to moderate the regret. Your experience did not help in making the decision because of fear of missing out (FOMO) on high returns.

Then, there is hot-cold empathy gap. You invest in digital assets, despite your System 2 telling you that most of these investments are unregulated. You are nevertheless tempted by the returns your friends claim to have earned on their investments. But your investment turns out to be a scam.

You then take a decision never to invest in products that are unregulated. You have taken a decision in a cold state – a state where you do not have a further craving for such investments. Sometime later, another friend tells you about a non-fungible token which appears to be a good investment. You yield to temptation and invest again! Why? When you decided to invest again, you switched back to the hot state- the state where there is craving for such investments. Taking a deliberate decision in a cold state may not help if we later flip to the hot state. Finally, there is present bias. Making the investment can give you happiness today. A bad outcome, if at all, will happen only in the future.

It is difficult to learn from past mistakes unless we create rules to moderate the biases we suffer from. A simple rule could be to discuss with your spouse, partner, sibling or parents before you make any investment decision. The other person is sure to remind you how a similar investment decision you made in the past failed.

(The author offers training programmes for individuals to manage their personal investments)

Personal Loans

Rates and Charges		Loan amount 5 lakh Tenure 5 years	Loan amount 1 lakh Tenure 5 years	(% of loan amount)
Name of Lender	**Interest Rate (%)**	**EMI (Rs)**	**EMI (Rs)**	**Processing fee**
HDFC Bank	9.99 onwards	10,621 onwards	2,124 onwards	Up to Rs 6,500
Tata Capital	10.99 onwards	10,869 onwards	2,174 onwards	Up to 3.5%
State Bank of India	10.05-15.05	10,636-11,908	2,127-2,382	NIL till Jan. 31
ICICI Bank	10.45 onwards	10,735 onwards	2,147 onwards	Up to 2%
Bank of Baroda*	10.40-18.05	10,722-12,710	2,144-2,542	Up to 2% (Max. Rs 10,000)
Axis Bank	9.99 onwards	10,621 onwards	2,124 onwards	Up to 2%
Kotak Mahindra Bank	10.99 onwards	10,869 onwards	2,174 onwards	Up to 5%
Bank of India	11.10-16.15	10,896-12,199	2,179-2,440	Up to 1% (Min. Rs 250; Max. Rs 15,000)
Canara Bank	9.95-15.40	10,611-12,000	2,122-2,400	Up to 0.25% (Max. Rs 2,500)
Punjab National Bank	10.50-17.05	10,747-12,440	2,149-2,488	Up to 1%
HSBC Bank	9.99 onwards	10,621 onwards	2,124 onwards	Up to 2%
Federal Bank	11.99 onwards	11,120 onwards	2,224 onwards	Up to 3%
Union Bank of India	10.35-14.45	10,710-11,751	2,142-2,350	Up to 1% (Max. Rs 7,500)
Bajaj Finserv	10.00-31.00	10,624-16,485	2,125-3,297	Up to 3.93%
Punjab & Sind Bank	9.60-13.85	10,525-11,595	2,105-2,319	0.50%-1%
Indian Overseas Bank	10.50 onwards	10,747 onwards	2,149 onwards	Up to 0.75%
UCO Bank	10.20-13.45	10,673-11,492	2,135-2,298	Up to 1% (Min. Rs 750)
IDFC FIRST Bank	9.99 onwards	10,621 onwards	2,124 onwards	2%
Bank of Maharashtra	8.75-13.55	10,319-11,518	2,064-2,304	Up to 1% (Max. Rs 10,000)
Central Bank of India	9.65-11.55	10,538-11,009	2,108-2,202	Up to 1%
IndusInd Bank	10.49 onwards	10,744 onwards	2,149 onwards	Up to 3.5% (2% for instant personal loans for limited period)

*Interest concession of 0.10% to customers opting for group credit life insurance.

Car Loans

Rates and Charges		Loan amount 5 lakh Tenure 5 years	(% of loan amount)
Name of Lender	**Interest Rate (%)**	**EMI (Rs)**	**Processing fee**
Union Bank of India	7.80-9.70	10,090 - 10,550	Up to Rs 1,000
Punjab National Bank	7.80-9.70	10,090 - 10,550	Up to 0.25% (Rs. 1,000 - Rs. 1,500)
Bank of Baroda	8.15-11.60	10,174 - 11,021	Up to Rs. 2,000
Canara Bank	7.70-11.70	10,067 - 11,047	100% waiver till 31.12.2025
Bank of India	7.85-12.15	10,102 - 11,160	Up to 0.25% (Rs. 2,500 - Rs. 10,000)
UCO Bank	7.60-10.25	10,043 - 10,685	NIL on all cars & electric vehicle loans
State Bank of India	8.75	10,319	Rs 750 - Rs 1,500
Bank of Maharashtra*	7.45-11.75	10,007 - 11,059	0.25% (Rs 1,000 - Rs 15,000)
Indian Overseas Bank	7.80-12.00	10,090 - 11,122	0.50% (Rs 500 - Rs 5,000)
ICICI Bank	8.50 onwards	10,258 onwards	Up to 2%
HDFC Bank	9.32 onwards	10,428 onwards	Up to 0.5% (Rs. 3,500 - Rs. 8,000)
Karnataka Bank	8.00-11.50	10,138 - 10,996	Up to 0.60% (Rs. 2,500 - Rs. 11,000)
Federal Bank	10.00 onwards	10,624 onwards	Rs. 2,000 - Rs. 4,500
Punjab and Sind Bank**	7.50-14.00	10,019 - 11,634	0.25% (Rs. 1,000 - Rs. 15,000)
Indian Bank	7.50-9.85	10,019 - 10,587	Rs. 1,200
IDFC FIRST Bank	9.99 onwards	10,621 onwards	Up to Rs. 10,000
Central Bank of India	7.60-9.20	10,043 - 10,428	No processing fee till 31.03.2026

*0.25% interest rate concession for existing home loan borrowers/ customers with at least 6 months relationship with the bank.
**Concession of up to 50% on processing fee for PSB Apna Vahan Sugam.

Rates and charges as on December 10 **Source: Paisabazaar.com**

HONG KONG

Hong Kong's last Opposition party to disband under China pressure

REUTERS

Hong Kong's Democratic Party, the city's last major Opposition group, voted on Sunday to disband amid mounting Chinese pressure and a sweeping national security crackdown. Once dominant in elections, the party's dissolution marks the end of Hong Kong's main pro-democracy voice. REUTERS

PESHAWAR

Pakistan security forces kill 13 TTP 'terrorists' in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

AFP

Pakistani security forces killed 13 TTP terrorists in two separate operations in the restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, the military media wing said on Sunday. The operations were conducted in the Mohmand and Bannu districts. Sanitisation operations are being conducted to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area. PTI

DAMASCUS

Syrian who killed Americans was part of security forces: Ministry

AP

Syria's Interior Ministry said on Sunday that the gunman who killed three Americans in the central Palmyra region the previous day was a member of the security forces who was to have been fired for extremism. U.S. President Donald Trump vowed "very serious retaliation" following Saturday's attack. AFP

JERUSALEM

Israel military says it killed two Hezbollah members in Lebanon

AP

The Israeli military said it killed two Hezbollah members in strikes on Sunday on southern Lebanon, where Israel has carried out repeated attacks despite an ongoing ceasefire with the Iran-backed group. The Lebanese Health Ministry said three people were killed in strikes in different parts of the south. AFP

Thailand declares a curfew along coast amid Cambodia border clash

Thailand is open to a diplomatic solution but 'Cambodia has to cease hostility first', says Defence Ministry spokesperson; clashes have persisted despite Trump's claim of ceasefire agreement; Cambodian rocket attack kills civilian in Thailand

Reuters
Associated Press
BANGKOK/KANTHARALAK

Thailand announced a curfew in its southeastern Trat province on Sunday as fighting with Cambodia spread to coastal areas of a disputed border region, two days after U.S. President and would-be peacemaker Donald Trump said the sides had agreed to stop.

The Southeast Asian neighbours have resorted to arms several times this year since a Cambodian soldier was killed in a May skirmish, reigniting a conflict that has displaced hundreds of thousands of people on both sides of the border.

A security volunteer splashes water to control a fire at a house after a Cambodian artillery strike in Sisaket, Thailand on Sunday. AP

"Overall, there have been clashes continuously" since Cambodia again reiterated its openness to a ceasefire on Saturday, Thai Defence Ministry spokesperson Rear Admiral Surasant Kongsiri told a press conference in Bangkok after announcing the curfew.

Thailand is open to a diplomatic solution but "Cambodia has to cease hostility first before we can negotiate," he said.

Thai forces on Saturday said they had destroyed a bridge that Cambodia used to deliver heavy weapons and other equipment to the region and launched an operation targeting pre-positioned artillery in Cambodia's coastal Koh Kong province.

Cambodia accused Thailand of striking civilian infrastructure.

Thailand's curfew covers five districts of Trat province that neighbour Koh Kong, excluding the tourist islands of Koh Chang and Koh Kood. The military had previously imposed a curfew in the eastern Sakeo province, which remains in force.

Meanwhile, Thailand's government said a rocket attack from Cambodia killed a 63-year-old villager, its first civilian death reported as a direct result of combat over the past week.

The victim, identified as Don Patchapan, was killed in the heart of a residential area near a school, according to a Thai Army statement. Thai spokesperson condemned Cambodia for deliberately firing into civilian areas.

Israel's actions threaten ceasefire: Hamas negotiator

Reuters
Agence France-Presse
CAIRO/DOHA

Hamas's chief negotiator Khalil Al-Hayya said on Sunday that a targeted assassination by Israel on Saturday of one of the group's senior commanders threatens the "viability of the truce" in the enclave.

In a televised address, Mr. Hayya, who is also exile Gaza Hamas chief, confirmed the killing of the group's senior commander Raed Saed in an Israeli strike a day earlier.

It was the highest-profile assassination of a senior Hamas figure since a U.S.-backed Gaza ceasefire deal came into effect in October.

"The continued Israeli violations to the ceasefire agreement...and latest assassinations that targeted Saed and others threaten the viability of the agreement," he said in an address.

"We call on mediators, and especially the main guarantor, the U.S. administration and President Donald Trump to work on obliging Israel to respect the ceasefire and commit to it," he added.

Khalil Al-Hayya

Hamas sources have described Saed as the second-in-command of the group's armed wing, after Izz eldeen Al-Hadad. Israel says Saed was one of the key architects of the October 7, 2023 attack on Israel that triggered the war.

'Legitimate right'

Separately, Mr. Hayya said that the militant group had a "legitimate right" to hold weapons and that any proposal for the next phases of the Gaza ceasefire must uphold that right.

"Resistance and its weapons are a legitimate right guaranteed by international law and are linked to the establishment of a Palestinian state," Mr. Hayya said on Al-Aqsa TV.

"We are open to studying any proposals that preserve this right while guaranteeing the establishment of a Palestinian state."

Mr. Hayya also spoke about the proposed UN-authorised International Stabilisation Force (ISF).

"The role of the international forces should be limited to maintaining the ceasefire and separating the two sides along Gaza borders...without any role inside the strip or intervention in its domestic affairs," he said.

Deployment of the force is a key part of the next phase of Mr. Trump's Gaza peace plan. Under the first phase, a fragile ceasefire in the two-year-old war began on October 10 with Hamas releasing hostages and Israel has freeing detained Palestinians.

Israel has repeatedly insisted Hamas "will be disarmed".

The third phase includes the reconstruction of the vast areas of Gaza levelled by Israel's retaliatory military campaign.

Zelenskyy relinquishes NATO ambition before peace talks

Reuters
BERLIN/KYIV

Ukraine has relinquished its ambition of joining the NATO military alliance in exchange for Western security guarantees as a compromise to end the war with Russia, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said ahead of talks with U.S. envoys in Berlin.

The move marks a major shift for Ukraine, which has fought to join NATO as a safeguard against Russian attacks and has such an aspiration included in its Constitution. It also meets one of Russia's war aims, although Kyiv has so far held firm against ceding territory to Moscow. Mr. Zelenskyy said on Sunday that the U.S., and European and other partners' security guarantees instead of NATO membership were a compromise on Ukraine's side.

Volodymyr Zelenskyy

"From the very beginning, Ukraine's desire was to join NATO, these are real security guarantees. Some partners from the U.S. and Europe did not support this direction," he said in answer to questions from presspersons in a WhatsApp chat.

"Thus, today, bilateral security guarantees between Ukraine and the U.S., Article 5-like guarantees for us from the U.S., and security guarantees from European colleagues, as well as other countries – Canada, Japan – are an opportunity to prevent another Russian invasion," Mr. Zelenskyy said. "And it is already a compromise from our part," he said, adding that the security guarantees should be legally binding.

Mr. Zelenskyy had earlier called for a "dignified" peace and guarantees that Russia would not attack Ukraine again as he prepared to meet U.S. envoys and European allies.

U.S. police detain suspect in deadly university shooting

Agence France-Presse
PROVIDENCE

The police in the United States on Sunday detained a "person of interest" in relation to a shooting at Brown University that left two persons dead and nine others wounded, Providence Mayor Brett Smiley said.

Speaking alongside the mayor at a news conference, Police Colonel Oscar Perez said the person was detained "earlier this morning" and law enforcement officers are "not at this point" looking for anyone else in relation to the attack.

A gunman opened fire at the Ivy League school on Saturday, with the school sending out an alert of "an active shooter near Barus and Holley Engineering". Two exams had been scheduled at the time.

Of the nine wounded one is in critical condition, seven are in stable condition and one has been discharged, Mr. Smiley said.

The police released 10-second footage of the suspect, seen from behind, walking briskly down a deserted street after opening fire inside a first-floor classroom.

The violence is the latest in a long line of school attacks in the United States, where attempts to restrict access to firearms face political deadlock.

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU
COMMISSIONERATE FOR WELFARE OF THE DIFFERENTLY ABLED
No.05, LADY WILLINGDON COLLEGE CAMPUS, KAMARAJAR SALAI, CHENNAI-600 005.

Roc.No. 5816 /A&A/RIGHTS/2025 **TENDER NOTICE** Date : 12.12.2025

Bids are invited from potential bidders for deployment, payroll administration and management of personnels in Madurai, Coimbatore, Salem, Chennai, Tiruchirappalli, Cuddalore, Vellore, Tirunelveli & Thanjavur region at DPIUs through the e-procurement portal. The complete details are available on the department website-**www.scd.tn.gov.in** as well as on the tender website-**tntenders.gov.in.**

Bids are to be uploaded through the e-procurement portal at **http://tntenders.gov.in**

Project Director – TN RIGHTS / Commissioner for Welfare the Differently Abled, Chennai-600 005 reserves the right to accept or reject the tenders without assigning any reason.

DIPR/ 6629 /TENDER/2025

Project Director – RIGHTS / Commissioner for Welfare of the Differently Abled

20,000 Myanmar soldiers, 200 officials deserted, says ex-Army officer who sought refuge in India

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

Around 20,000 soldiers and 200 military officials have deserted the Myanmar military, which is engaged in combating Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs), said a military officer who deserted his post in Sagaing region bordering India's Northeast after the junta started a crackdown following the February 2021 coup.

In an exclusive chat with *The Hindu* held here this week, Captain Kaung Thu Win, who left the military in 2021, said the Myanmar military "indiscriminately killed civilians and confiscated private property and indulged in human rights abuses" that requires a solution that will not emerge from the three-phase election that Myanmar will undergo from December 28.

"Many military personnel are unwilling to participate in the killings and property grab that are going on in Myanmar. Around 20,000 soldiers and 200 military officers who have deserted the Tatmadaw (Myanmar military) are staying in Myanmar's border areas with India and Thailand and in the "liberated zones" inside Myanmar," Capt. Kaung Thu Win said during a rare visit to New Delhi this week.

The 36-year-old captain had joined the Defence Service Academy located in Pyin Oo Lwin at the age of 16 and said he witnessed "a lot of crimes being committed by the military against people since the beginning of the coup".

Captain Kaung Thu Win.
KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE

"I saw the military using civilians as human shields, confiscation of private property by the soldiers, arbitrary demolition of homes as punitive measures. All these were normal things for my colleagues that became part of their lives and I could not accept that," said Capt. Kaung Thu Win, explaining the reasons that prompted him to leave his post at the Northwest Command of Myanmar military at Monywa in Sagaing region, which borders India's Northeast.

'Only option'

Capt. Kaung Thu Win said that since leaving Myanmar, he has become the India-representative of 'People's Goal', an organisation campaigning for restoration of democracy in Myanmar. He acknowledged that while life has not been easy since leaving the military, he was helped indirectly by Indian authorities who displayed leniency towards him, enabling him to reside in Mizoram.

"The junta wants to hold elections without any reform and it is further proof that the armed struggle is the only option, as the military is not serious about holding talks with the Opposition or the exiled National Unity Government," said Capt. Kaung Thu Win, adding that 30 EAOs are part of the resistance whereas around 10 outfits are currently fighting the military.

He urged India to convey to Myanmar's military that the "people of Myanmar have rejected the election already".

THE HINDU GROUP
THE HINDU
REWIND 2025
TRIVIA QUIZ
DAY 10

1. Which legislative assembly became the first in India to run entirely on solar energy after inaugurating a 500-kW rooftop solar power plant ahead of its Monsoon Session in August 2025?
2. In April 2025, ISRO marked the Golden Jubilee of which experimental satellite, launched in 1975 from the then-USSR, named after an ancient Indian astronomer?
3. Where was India's first hydrogen-powered railway coach successfully tested in July 2025?

*T&C apply.

Scan QR code or visit
bit.ly/Rewind2024TriviaQuiz
take the quiz. Top 3 winners* every day win gift vouchers.

Answer to yesterday's quiz:
1. Louvre
2. Parasocial
3. Tamil Nadu

Yesterday's Winners:
1. Priti Shrivas, Nagpur | 2. Nikhil.B, Chennai | 3. Nikith Soma, Hyderabad

IN ELITE CLUB

Hardik fourth to achieve rare treble in the T20I format

R.V. MOORTHY

Hardik Pandya became the fourth to the achieve the treble of 1,000 runs, 100 sixes and 100 wickets in T20Is when he completed a century of wickets in the shortest format on Sunday. Hardik joined Zimbabwe's Sikandar Raza, Afghanistan's Mohammed Nabi and Malaysia's Virandeep Singh in the rare club.

GROWING IN STATURE

Varun becomes second-fastest Indian to claim 50 T20I wickets

R.V. MOORTHY

Spinner Varun Chakaravarthy on Sunday became the second-fastest Indian to reach the milestone of 50 T20I wickets. Varun achieved the mark when he castled South Africa's Donovan Ferreira at Dharamshala. In 32 T20Is, he has taken 51 wickets. Varun is second only to Kuldeep Yadav (30 matches) to reach the landmark.

BIG PRAISE

'They got the ball in the right areas, didn't give us much to score off'

R.V. MOORTHY

South Africa captain Aiden Markram praised the Indian bowlers. "They got the ball in the right areas, and before you know it we were four-five down. If we get similar conditions, we have to put pressure back. Credit to them. They didn't give us much to score off," said Markram.

NO CHANGE IN STAND

India maintains 'no-handshake' policy against Pakistan

X@ASIANCRICKETCOUNCIL

India maintained its 'no-handshake' policy against Pakistan during the U-19 Asia Cup match in Dubai on Sunday. India captain Ayush Mhatre and his Pakistani counterpart Farhan Yousaf ignored each other during the toss. Players of the two sides did not also shake hands after the match which the Indian colts won by 90 runs.

Clinical India regains lead with a thumping win

Arshdeep and Harshit set the tone with early strikes; Hardik, Varun, Dube and Kuldeep, too, chip in; Markram top-scores with a fighting 61; Abhishek makes short work of the chase

Blistering start: Abhishek's early onslaught put India on the road to victory. R.V. MOORTHY

SA IN INDIA

Ashwin Achal
DHARAMSHALA

India turned up the heat on a chilly Dharamshala night to flatten South Africa by seven wickets in the third T20I here on Sunday. The win, set up by an exceptional bowling performance, gave India a 2-1 lead in the five-match series.

The home team sat in the driver's seat from start to finish in a dominant show.

After electing to field, India was ruthless with the ball, bundling South Africa out for 117. The one-sided chase, which started with Abhishek Sharma lofting Lungi Ngidi for a massive six, was done and dusted in 15.5 overs.

A sizzling Arshdeep Singh and Harshit Rana put South Africa in a hole in the PowerPlay. Arshdeep got the new ball to move sharply away, and when he brought the odd one back in, he had Reeza Hendricks plumb in front.

Arshdeep (two for 13) honed in on the perfect line and length, in stark contrast to the endless wides he delivered in the previous match.

Harshit, drafted into the XI because Jasprit Bumrah returned home for personal reasons, took out the in-form Quinton de Kock with a skiddy delivery.

The visitor was put in a chokehold, crawling to 25 for three in six overs. There was no respite when Hardik Pandya came on to bowl, as the all-rounder induced a nick from Tristan Stubbs to record his 100th T20I scalp.

Wickets continued to tumble, with seamer Shivam Dube and spinner Varun Chakaravarthy grabbing a share of the spoils.

Only captain Aiden Markram (61, 46b, 6x4, 2x6) put up some resistance. His patience paid off when he smacked Harshit for two sixes and a four in the 18th over – a rare bright spot for South Africa. Markram would later add another highlight, when he ran back a great distance to pull off a fine catch to dismiss Abhishek.

Left-arm spinner Kuldeep Yadav, who got his chance due to an illness to Axar Patel, claimed two wickets in the final over to wrap up the innings.

Despite India dropping no less than four catches, South Africa was kept down to the lowest men's T20I team total at this venue. The big crowd at the HPCA Stadium enjoyed every bit of India's response. Abhishek (35, 18b, 3x4, 3x6) and Shubman Gill (28, 28b, 5x4) powered the side to 68 for one at the end of the PowerPlay, leaving the Proteas with nowhere to hide.

With the result a foregone conclusion, Gill used the chance to find a bit of form.

Skipper Suryakumar Yadav (12, 11b, 2x4), another batter in desperate need of runs, was not at his best in this brief stint.

Tilak Varma, the standout batter in the second T20I, continued his good run with an unbeaten 26.

Shivam Dube (not out) 10 (*4b, 1x4, 1x6*); Extras (lb-7, w-2): 9; Total (for three wkts. in 15.5 overs): 120.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-60 (Abhishek, 5.2), 2-92 (Gill, 11.4), 3-109 (Suryakumar, 14.4).

SOUTH AFRICA BOWLING
Ngidi 3-0-23-1, Jansen 3-0-24-1, Baartman 3.5-0-34-0, Bosch 3-0-18-1, Nortje 3-0-14-0.

Toss: India.
PoM: Arshdeep.
India won by seven wickets with 25 balls to spare, leads five-match series 2-1.
Fourth T201: December 17, Lucknow, 7 p.m.

SCOREBOARD

SOUTH AFRICA
Quinton de Kock lbw b Harshit 1 (*3b*), Reeza Hendricks lbw b Arshdeep 0 (*3b*), Aiden Markram c Jitesh b Arshdeep 61 (*46b, 6x4, 2x6*), Dewald Brevis b Harshit 2 (*7b*), Tristan Stubbs c Jitesh b Hardik 9 (*13b*), Corbin Bosch b Dube 4 (*9b*), Donovan Ferreira b Varun 20 (*15b, 1x4, 1x6*), Marco Jansen b Varun 2 (*7b*), Anrich Nortje st. Jitesh b Kuldeep 12 (*12b, 1x6*), Lungi Ngidi (not out) 2 (*3b*), Ottneil Baartman c Suryakumar b Kuldeep 1 (*2b*); Extras (b-1, lb-2): 3; Total (in 20 overs): 117.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-1 (Hendricks, 0.4 overs), 2-1 (de Kock, 1.2), 3-7 (Brevis, 3.1), 4-30 (Stubbs, 6.6), 5-44 (Bosch, 10.1), 6-69 (Ferreira, 13.3), 7-77 (Jansen, 15.1), 8-113 (Markram, 18.3), 9-115 (Nortje, 19.3 ov).

INDIA BOWLING
Arshdeep 4-0-13-2, Harshit 4-0-34-2, Hardik 3-0-23-1, Varun 4-0-11-2, Dube 3-0-21-1, Kuldeep 2-0-12-2.

INDIA
Abhishek Sharma c Markram b Bosch 35 (*18b, 3x4, 3x6*), Shubman Gill b Jansen 28 (*28b, 5x4*), Tilak Varma (not out) 26 (*34b, 3x4*), Suryakumar Yadav c Baartman b Ngidi 12 (*11b, 2x4*),

Not worried about Gill and Suryakumar's dip in form: Abhishek

Ashwin Achal
DHARAMSHALA

Gill. R.V. MOORTHY

India opener Abhishek Sharma is not worried about the dip in form that has affected Shubman Gill and Suryakumar Yadav.

"I'll tell you one thing straight away. Trust me, Suryakumar and Shubman will win matches for India in the World Cup, and matches before the World Cup as well. I've played with them for so long, especially with Shubman.

"I know where Shubman can excel, in what conditions, irrespective of the opponent. I have full trust in him. Very soon, everyone else will gain that trust in him too," Abhishek, who scored a fluent 35 in the third T20I against South Africa here on Sunday, said in the post-match press conference.

South Africa captain Aiden Markram stated that he was surprised that the match turned out to be a low-scoring affair.

"Everything took us by surprise. It looked like a good batting wicket. The Indian team felt the same, as did Ravi Shastri (at the toss). We did not expect it to do that much. It was challenging, but you have to have a plan to try and get a competitive score. Ultimately, we were 20-30 runs short," Markram said.

India outplays Pakistan for second straight win

U-19 ASIA CUP

Press Trust of India
DUBAI

A disciplined bowling performance, led by all-rounder Kanishk Chouhan and seamer Deepesh Devendran, powered India to a comprehensive 90-run victory over Pakistan in their Group A match of the Under-19 Asia Cup, here on Sunday.

Hero! Kanishk Chouhan, third from left, delivered with an all-round show. X@ACCMEDIA1

Early setbacks

Put in to bat, in a match reduced to 49 overs because of rain, India scored 240 in 46.1 overs, riding on Aaron George's fluent 85 and useful contributions from captain Ayush Mhatre (38) and Chouhan (46). Pakistan was then bundled out for 150 in 41.2 overs, never quite recovering from early setbacks.

India got off to a brisk start with Mhatre striking four boundaries and three sixes during his 25-ball knock before Mohammad Sayyam removed him and fellow-opener Vaibhav Suryavanshi inside the first 10 overs.

Aaron then held the innings together, finding the gaps consistently and adding stability through the middle phase.

Chouhan's late flourish, which included three sixes, helped India cross the 230-run mark despite losing wickets regularly. For Pakistan, Sayyam (three for 67) and Abdul Subhan (three for 42) were the standout bowlers.

Falling short

Pakistan's chase faltered early as it slipped to 30 for four, with Devendran striking thrice in a sharp opening spell. Though captain Farhan Yousaf (23) and Huzaifa Ahsan attempted to steady the innings, Chouhan's incisive off-spin broke the resistance.

Ahsan top-scored for Pakistan with 70 off 83 balls, but lacked support at the other end.

Chouhan finished with three for 33, while Devendran returned figures of three for 16 as India maintained a firm grip on the contest throughout to register its second big win win in the group.

The scores: India 240 in 46.1 overs (Aaron George 85, Kanishk Chouhan 46, Mohd. Sayyam three for 67, Abdul Subhan 3/42) bt Pakistan 150 in 41.2 overs (Huzaifa Ahsan 70, Kanishk Chouhan 3/33, Deepesh Devendran 3/16).
Toss: Pakistan.
PoM: Chouhan.

City, Villa keep the pressure on Arsenal

EURO LEAGUES

Associated Press
LONDON

Manchester City and Aston Villa kept the pressure on Premier League leader Arsenal with wins on Sunday.

Nottingham Forest pulled further away from the relegation zone with a 3-0 victory against Tottenham and Sunderland beat Newcastle 1-0 in the Tyne-Wear derby after an own-goal from Nick Woltemade.

Arsenal had extended its lead at the top of the standings to five points with a 2-1 win against Wolves on Saturday. But a day later second-placed City won 3-0 at Crystal Palace and Villa, in third, twice came back to beat West Ham 3-2.

The results: Premier League:

Crystal Palace 0 lost to Manchester City 3 (Haaland 41, 89-pen, Foden 69).

Nottingham Forest 3 (Hudson-Odoi 28, 50, Sangare 79) bt Tottenham 0; Sunderland 1 (Woltemade 46-og) bt Newcastle 0; West Ham 2 (Fernandes 1, Bowen 24) lost to Aston Villa 3 (Mavropanos 9-og, Rogers 50, 79).

LaLiga: Sevilla 4 (Adams 4, Sow 22, Mendy 51, Ejuke 89) bt Real Oviedo 0

Serie A: AC Milan 2 (Bartesaghi 34, 47) drew with Sassuolo 2 (Kone 13, Lauriente 77); Udinese 1 (Ekkelenkamp 73) bt Napoli 0.

On Saturday: Premier League: Burnley 2 (Ugochukwu 21, Sonne 86) lost to Fulham 3 (Smith Rowe 9, Bassey 31, Wilson 58).

Arsenal 2 (Johnstone 70-og, Mosquera 90+4-og) bt Wolves 1 (Arokodare 90).

LaLiga: Barcelona 2 (Raphinha 70, 86) bt Osasuna 0; Getafe 0 lost to Espanyol 1 (Cabrera 53).

Bundesliga: Bayer Leverkusen 2 (Terrier 66, Andrich 72) bt Cologne 0; Eintracht Frankfurt 1 (Doan 68) bt Augsburg 0.

Thundering strike: Rogers fires in Villa's third against West Ham. AP

Messi, Tendulkar, Chhetri make it a Super Sunday

GOAT TOUR

Sports Bureau
MUMBAI

It will be a moment etched in Mumbai's sporting folklore as Indian cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar met Argentine football superstar Lionel Messi at the Wankhede Stadium on Sunday evening. Tendulkar presented Messi with the iconic 2011 World Cup jersey, bearing his name and the No. 10 on the back.

On his part, Messi handed over Tendulkar a replica of the ball used in Argentina's 2022 World Cup triumph. Yet, the loudest cheer of the night was reserved for a different exchange – when Messi handed over his Argentina jersey to Sunil Chhetri, Indian football's enduring face, triggering a roar that momentarily drowned out chants of both "Sachin... Sachin" and "Messi... Messi."

The hallowed turf of the Wankhede thus added another glorious chapter to the country's sporting history as Tendulkar and Messi shared the centrestage during the grand event in Mumbai, the Argentine superstar's third stop on his four-city GOAT India tour.

Meeting of the legends: Messi soaked in the adulation in Tendulkar's company. EMMANUAL YOGINI

Messi spent an hour at the venue, interacting with young footballers, Tendulkar, Chhetri and celebrities from the entertainment world. Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, in attendance with his wife Amruta, and veteran football administrator Praful Patel, announced the launch of Project Maha-Deva, a state-wide initiative aimed at identifying and nurturing young football talent, while assuring world-class infrastructure support.

Accompanied by Inter Miami teammates Luis Suarez and Rodrigo de Paul, Messi walked out to a packed stadium that resonated with chants of "Messi... Messi", at times making the Wankhede feel closer to Barcelona's Camp Nou. The chants of "Sachin... Sachin" peaked once Tendulkar joined Messi on stage, with the batting legend recalling India's 2011 World Cup triumph at the venue and praising Messi's dedication and achievements.

The Argentinian great also interacted with former India captain Chhetri, members of the Mitra Stars and India Stars teams who featured in a seven-a-side exhibition match, and young players from Project Maha-Deva. The evening concluded with Messi and his teammates taking a lap of the ground, kicking footballs into the stands – a moment that will remain with Mumbai's sports fans for a long time.

INBRIEF

Unnati, Kiran clinch singles titles in Odisha Masters

Unnati Hooda and Kiran George clinched the women's and men's singles titles respectively in the Odisha Masters Super 100 badminton tournament at Cuttack on Sunday. Unnati defeated compatriot Isharani Baruah 21-17, 21-10 in just over half-an-hour while the men's final witnessed a gripping contest with second seed Kiran prevailing over Indonesia's Muhamad Yusuf 21-14, 13-21, 21-16 in a match that lasted 65 minutes.

The results: Finals: Men: Kiran George bt Muhamad Yusuf 21-14, 13-21, 21-16; **Doubles:** Khang Khai Xing & Aaron Tai (Mas) lost to Ali Faathir Rayhan & Devin Artha Wahyudi (Ina) 21-15, 12-21, 16-21.

Women: Unnati Hooda bt Isharani Baruah 21-17, 21-10; **Doubles:** Gabriela & Stefani Stoeva (Bul) bt Ong Xin Yee and Carmen Ting (Mas) 21-19, 21-14.

Mixed doubles: Marwan Faza & Aisyah Pranata bt Dejan Ferdinansyah & Bernadine Wardana 21-15, 21-10.

Chandaria seals it for Chennai Turbo Riders

Kenya's Shane Chandaria clinched the third season of the FIA-certified Formula 4 Indian Championship at the Madras International Circuit here on Sunday. The 15-year-old also became the series' youngest champion. Starting the first race of the day in pole position, the teenager finished second behind Sachel Rotge which was enough to give him the crown. India's Veer Sheth finished third. In the second race, 16-year-old South African Luviwe Sambudla of Goa Aces JA Racing topped the podium ahead of Rotge and Chandaria. Rotge finished second amd seven-time Indian National Karting champion Ishaan Madesh finished third in the championship. Chennai Turbo Riders, meanwhile, won the team title.

European Rally C'ship title for Team MRF Tyres

Team MRF Tyres was officially crowned at the FIA Awards Gala for winning the 2025 FIA European Rally Championship (ERC) team title, with Arun Mammen, right in pic, Vice-Chairman and Managing Director of MRF Ltd., collecting the trophy on Friday. The 2025 ERC campaign saw Team MRF Tyres deliver consistently outstanding performances across diverse terrain, rally by rally. MRF Tyres secured the ERC Team Championship for the third time, following the titles achieved in 2022 and 2023. At the gala, Arun Mammen, commented: "We are deeply honoured to receive the Team Title at such a prestigious occasion. This award recognises not only the work of our engineers and staff, but also the spirit, dedication and resilience of the entire MRF Tyres organisation, both on and off the stages of the 2025 ERC. "When preparation, performance and passion come together, tyres can make the difference. This trophy underlines our commitment and encourages us to continue delivering our very best in the seasons to come".

Jon Ansotegi to step in for Sergio Francisco at Sociedad

Real Sociedad sacked coach Sergio Francisco on Sunday with the team down in 15th in LaLiga. Current Sanse coach Jon Ansotegi will be in charge of leading, provisionally, the team into the two matches they have before the Christmas break," said Real Sociedad in a statement.

LIVE TELECAST

Men's U-19 Asia Cup: Sony Sports Ten 1, 2 & LIV, 10.30 a.m.
Premier League: SS Select 1 & JioHotstar, 1.30 a.m. (Tuesday)
Serie A: DAZN, 1.15 a.m. (Tuesday)
LaLiga: FanCode, 1.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

Ton-up Jaiswal powers Mumbai past Haryana, keeps remote chances alive

Hyderabad makes it two out of two to consolidate top spot; Hemanth's hundred helps Andhra eliminate Punjab; Jharkhand edges MP by one run

SMAT

Shayan Acharya
PUNE

As Yashasvi Jaiswal brought up his century with a single off Anshul Kamboj amid huge cheers from the crowd on Sunday, he touched the Mumbai crest on his shirt and raised his bat towards the dugout.

While his teammates acknowledged his contribution with a standing ovation, Jaiswal (101, 50b, 16x4, 1x6) put on his helmet again to get back to action.

With the target of 235 still seven runs away, Jaiswal wanted to finish things off quickly to improve the team's net run rate (NRR), but the left-hander was dismissed immediately by Samant Jakhar.

But Atharva Ankolekar struck a six and a four to close off the game as Mumbai earned a four-wicket win against Haryana, with 15 balls to spare. This was also the second-highest successful run chase in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy.

The architect: Jaiswal smashed 16 fours and a six in his match-winning century.
MAHARASHTRA CRICKET ASSOCIATION

However, this may still not be enough for the defending champion to reach the final as Hyderabad pulled off a convincing six-wicket win against Rajasthan to top the Group-B with two successive victories in the Super League.

Mumbai needs to defeat Rajasthan by a huge margin on Tuesday, and hope for other Hyderabad to slip up badly against Haryana.

With Mumbai bowling first in the do-or-die battle, Haryana rode on captain Ankit Kumar's 89 and an unbeaten 63 by Nishant Sindhu, who braved an injured finger, to put up a mammoth 234 for three.

But Mumbai got to 50 off just 19 deliveries, with Jaiswal and Ajinkya Rahane dominating.

Timely reminder

After Rahane's exit, Sarfaraz Khan (64, 25b, 9x4, 3x6) sent a timely reminder to the franchises with a 17-ball-50 to turn the tide in Mumbai's favour. Jaiswal changed gears after Sarfaraz fell, and stood firm, even as Mumbai lost a few quick wickets.

Meanwhile, Hyderabad's juggernaut rolled on as it chased down Rajasthan's 178 for nine, riding on Tanmay Agarwal's 41-ball-73 and Buddhi Rahul's 55 off 36. With C.V. Milind and Tanay Thyagarajan claiming three wickets each, Hyderabad jolted Rajasthan's top-order before Mohammed Siraj picked up two wickets in his second spell.

In Group-A matches, N. Hemanth Reddy's unbeaten 53-ball-109 helped Andhra knock Punjab out with a five-wicket win, while Madhya Pradesh choked against Jharkhand to suffer a one-run defeat.

The scores: Haryana 234/3 in 20 overs (Ankit Kumar 89, Nishant Sindhu 63 n.o., Samant Jakhar 31) lost to Mumbai 238/6 in 17.3 overs (Yashasvi Jaiswal 101, Sarfaraz Khan 64).

Punjab 205/5 in 20 overs (Harnoor Singh 42, Anmolpreet Singh 47,Salil Arora 42 n.o., Ramandeep Singh 43) lost to Andhra 211/5 in 19.5 overs (N. Hemanth Reddy 109 n.o., SDNV Prasad 53 n.o., Gurnoor Brar 3/23).

Rajasthan 178/9 in 20 overs (Mahipal Lomror 48, C.V. Milind 3/25, Tanay Thyagarajan 3/38) lost to Hyderabad 179/4 in 17.1 overs (Tanmay Agarwal 73, Buddhi Rahul 55).

Jharkhand 181/9 in 20 overs (Ishan Kishan 63, Venkatesh Iyer 3/17) bt Madhya Pradesh 180/4 in 20 overs (Harsh Gawali 61, (Harpreet Singh Bhatia 77 n.o.).

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Hrithik and Krishna set up mammoth win for DPS, East

K. Hrithik Polin (201 n.o.) and Krishna (191 n.o.) starred for Delhi Public School, East as it thrashed Frank Anthony Public School by 408 runs in the BT Ramaiah Shield U-14 first division school tournament.

The scores:

DPS, South 199/9 in 50 overs (Viresh Moktan 42, Pratham Sanjeev Kulkarni 3/18) bt BGS NPS 152 in 41 overs.

DPS, East 497/3 in 50 overs (Anirudh Venkata Rayasam 75, K. Hrithik Polin 201 n.o., Krishna 191 n.o.) bt Frank Anthony PS 89 in 37.1 overs (Mohammed Umair 53).

Presidency School, RT Nagar 175 in 43.1 overs (Shubhan Hiremath 40) lost to Gopalan NS 176/8 in 46.2 overs.

St. Joseph's BHS 397/3 in 50 overs (Prabhav Pydah 206, S.M. Bhavith 49, M. Kanishk Reddy 81 n.o.) bt St. Joseph's Indian HS 159/9 in 50 overs (B.A. Gowri Shankar 40, L. Piyush Raj 4/25).

Sri Kumaran Children's Home, CBSE 131/7 in 50 overs (Shrutik Ghosh 52 n.o) lost to Poorna Vikasa Vidyalaya 132/3 in 16.2 overs (Sharav Chetan Koundinya 50, Sachith Shetty 44 n.o.).

Canara Bank triumphs, pips DYES-A in final

Canara Bank edged out DYES-A 5-4 after a penalty shoot-out (regulation time 2-2) to win the Hockey Karnataka Namdhari Cup here on Sunday.

The result (final):

Canara Bank 2 (V.S. Vinaya 13, 55) bt DYES-A 2 (Harish Mutagar 12, A.A. Desh Poovaiah 26) [5-4 after penalty shoot-out].

Bengaluru races for Dec. 19 cancelled

The Stewards of the Bangalore Turf Club have decided to cancel the 10th day races, scheduled to be held on December 19 (Friday), due to administrative reasons.

Target is to be more consistent and improve my rating: Nandhidhaa

CHESS

C. Shyam Sundar
CHENNAI

It has been an up-and-down year for P.V. Nandhidhaa. A second straight National title has probably come at the right time for 29-year-old Tamil Nadu player, who is now keen to focus on improving her rating and on being consistent. "This is a very important (win) for me. Last year, I won the Nationals and then did well in the Qatar Masters. It's been almost a year since I won a good tournament," Nandhidhaa told *The Hindu*, hoping it would be the beginning of a good run in the future.

Big moves: Nandhidhaa aims to build on the successful title defence at the Nationals. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Admitting that she was going through a tough phase, the Salem-based player said in events held during the year, she used to begin well before faltering.

"I started well, but I lost in the last three rounds in the Asian championships. It was frustrating. It (this victory) feels like a comeback after a long time. I have confidence that things will go well (from hereon).

She said the aim would be to be more consistent and improve her rating.

"I mess up after I get into good positions... need to improve there. I need to play a lot of training games," said Nandhidhaa while crediting coach M. Shyam Sundar for the success in the Nationals.

Not wanting to rest on her laurels after defending the National title successfully, she says she would soon resume training with Shyam Sundar.

"My plan for 2026 is to focus on the rating. The Olympiad will be held next year. I want to improve the rating (currently 2257) so that I can get selected in the team.

"I intend to play more Open tournaments," said Nandhidhaa, who will participate in the forthcoming World Rapid and Blitz championship in Doha.

Watching the growth of 200m has been heartening: Lyles

ATHLETICS

Jonathan Selvaraj
PUNE

Even though he competes in the sprints – one of the few events in track and field that has never suffered a shortage of outspoken personalities – Noah Lyles stands out as someone who is probably the brashest of his generation.

He enters the track with flamboyant pre-race routines and Yu-Gi-Oh cards, wins races wearing fingernail polish, a glitzy, multicoloured chain-link necklace and celebrates victories by cheekily calling out giant American domestic sports leagues for their claims of being 'world' champions.

Ahead of the Bajaj Life Pune Marathon on Sunday which he flagged off, Lyles spoke to *Sportstar* about how he views his legacy, the accomplishments that mean the most to him, and the vulnerabilities his brash personality hides.

Chilled out: Lyles says that when he is in his safe space, it's a pretty heavy dial-down. EMMANUAL YOGINI

What's something you realised this year that has meant a lot to you?

Watching the growth of the 200m as a competition. It's made me very emotional. When I first came into the sport, Bolt had just left. [Justin] Gatlin was on his way out. Yohan [Blake] was up and down. We had this drought in my favourite event. Then I started to see the times drop, the averages drop. We've had the fastest semifinal times at a World Championships. We've had the fastest Olympic finals we've ever seen in this event. That has been very enjoyable to watch.

How much of what we see of you on social media or TV is a dialled-up-to-10 version of you?

It's maybe a dialled-up-to-12 version of me. When I'm in my safe space, it's a pretty heavy dial-down. Some people are shocked at how relaxed I can be, especially in my own home. I'm pretty quiet there. I might be playing video games. I might be laughing with friends. I don't have to be a 10 there.

At practice, though, I'm very driven. I might not even talk a lot because I'm hyper-focused on getting everything out of practice to make it better. Then, when we get to the races, I get to be the showman. I get to let out that personality, that excitement I've been building up.

You are just 28 but are you already thinking about your legacy?

I don't think my legacy is going to stop at any point just on the track. I'm still going to be involved. I'm still going to be pushing for new avenues and new spaces for track to reside in, and trying to create new opportunities for the athletes coming behind me. I think that will add to the legacy I created while I was on the track.

Triveni Continental Kings starts with a win over Alpine SG Pipers

P.K. Ajith Kumar
MUMBAI

On the day, Lionel Messi landed in Mumbai, thousands queued up in front of the Wankhede Stadium. Sharvari Patankar wasn't one of them.

The young mechanical engineer was about three-km away from the iconic cricket stadium, at the Royal Opera House, waiting for her own sporting hero Viswanathan Anand. She did better: she got him to sing on her chessboard. She got an autograph from R. Praggnanandhaa, too.

There were exciting shouts of "Pragg, Pragg," as the 20-year-old from Chennai made his way out of the venue. Anish Giri, against whom the Indian star will play at the Candidates in Cyprus in March-April next year, also was obliging.

It was indeed a memorable homecoming for the Global Chess League. The league, organised by Tech Mahindra and approved by FIDE, was played at Dubai and London in the first two editions.

Triveni Continental Kings was the winner on both the occasions. And the Kings opened its title defence on the right note:

First strike: Firouzja beat Caruana to put Triveni Continental Kings on the road to victory. GCL

It beat Alpine SG Pipers 9-7, riding on wins of its strongest players, Alireza Firouzja and Wei Yi, over Fabiano Caruana and Giri. The match also pitted the women's World No. 1 against the No. 2, and that game between the two Chinese players, Hou Yifan and Zhu, was drawn.

The opening day saw upGrad Mumba Masters, scoring a crushing 17-4 victory against Ganges Grandmasters.

Sharvari was thrilled to watch all those games live at the venue. She had spent more than ₹1,000 for her ticket. "I will be back to watch the league."

The results: Triveni Continental Kings bt Alpine SG Pipers 9-7 (Alireza Firouzja bt Fabiano Caruana; Wei Yi bt Anish Giri; Vidit Gujrathi drew with R. Praggnanandhaa; Zhu Jiner drew with Hou Yifan; Alexandra Kosteniuk lost to Nino Batsiashvilli; MarcAndria Maurizzi drew with Leon Mendonca).

Ganges Grandmasters lost to upGrad Mumba Masters 4-17 (Viswanathan Anand lost to Maxime Vachier-Lagrave; Vincent Keymer drew with Wesley So; Javokhir Sindarov lost to Shakhriyar Mamedyarov; Polina Shuvalova bt Koneru Humpy; Stavroula Tsolakidou lost to D. Harika; Raunak Sadhwani lost to Baridya Daneshvar).

Fyers American Gambits bt PBG Alaskan Knights 8-5 (Hikaru Nakamura drew with D. Gukesh; Vladislav Artemiev drew with Arjun Erigiasi; Richard Rapport drew with Leinier Dominguez; Bibisara Assaubayeva drew with Kateryna Lagno; Teodora Injac bt Sarasadat Khademalsharieh; Volodar Murzin drew with Daniel Dardha).

(The writer is in Mumbai at the invitation of Tech Mahindra.)

India too good for Hong Kong, wins maiden crown

Backed by vociferous support, the host produces a clinical and commanding display to overwhelm the top seed in the final

SQUASH WORLD CUP

K. Keerthivasan
CHENNAI

Proud moment: The Indian squash team that triumphed with ease. R. RAGU

The Express Avenue Mall was packed, and the Indian team delivered a performance worthy of the occasion. Backed by vociferous support, the host produced a clinical and commanding display to overwhelm top seed Hong Kong 3-0 and lift the squash World Cup on Sunday. This is the first time that the two countries competed in the final.

The emphatic triumph marked India's finest showing in the competition, eclipsing its previous best – a bronze medal in 2023. Hong Kong, too, returned with its best-ever finish at the event, having placed eighth two years ago.

Joshna Chinappa, world ranked 79, negotiated a few early hiccups to give India a winning start, overcoming Ka Yi Lee – ranked 42 places above – 7-3, 2-7, 7-5, 7-1 in 23 minutes.

After cruising through the opening game, where her superior court-craft spoke, Joshna was forced to dig deep as Lee lifted her intensity in the next two games, striking a series of exquisite winners from the backcourt. The veteran, however, showed why experience counts. Unfazed by the brief reversal, the 39-year-old held her nerve to clinch the tight third game 7-5 before shutting the door decisively in the fourth, denying Lee any chance of a comeback.

Abhay Singh, always a big-match performer and visibly charged up in national colours, then took centre-stage.

The 27-year-old delivered a ruthless display to sweep aside reigning Asian champion Alex Lau in straight games.

Anahat Singh completed the formalities in emphatic fashion, as she brushed aside the Asian champion Tomato Ho in just 16 minutes to seal the tie.

India coach Harinder Singh said winning the World Cup was special. "It's a big win for us. It was a high pressure match [against Hong Kong and Egypt (in the semifinals) and we delivered," he said.

Joshna revealed this will be ranked among her top five performances, and India's best achievement at home.

The result (final): India bt Hong Kong 3-0 (Joshna Chinappa bt Ka Yi Lee 7-3, 2-7, 7-5, 7-1; Abhay Singh bt Alex Lau 7-1, 7-4, 7-4; Anahat Singh bt Tomato Ho 7-2, 7-2, 7-5).

Valiant Lalit subdues More to retain the 55kg title

WRESTLING

Y.B. Sarangi
AHMEDABAD

Great comeback: Lalit, left, rallied past More. VIJAY SONEJI

Defending champion Lalit made a superb comeback to pin two-time World under-23 bronze medallist and fellow Services wrestler Vishvajit More in an action-packed final and retain his Greco-Roman 55kg title on the concluding day of the National wrestling championships at the Veer Savarkar Sports Complex, Naranpura, here on Sunday.

Lalit's gold helped Services give Railways a close chase for the team title. Both teams were tied on 190 points apiece, but Railways won it for securing four gold against Services' three.

In a keenly-fought title clash, More, donning Maharashtra colours, gained early ground by taking a 5-0 lead, through three single points off push-outs and a take-down from an advantageous 'par terre' position, in the first period. However, a never-say-die Lalit, who had beaten More 13-7 in the inter-Services final, fought back valiantly.

Following flashes of explosive action, More relied on a successful video referral to stay 7-4 ahead. But Lalit, an Asian under-23 bronze medallist and a two-time National under-23 champion, effected two push-outs and a take-down to close the gap in quick succession before pinning More spectacularly.

"I had the confidence to fight back," said Lalit.

Up-and-coming Sahil Kadyan made light of his bleeding nose to rally from 0-1 in the first period and beat experienced Udit Patel to bag his maiden National title in 60kg. After going 3-1 up, 20-year-old Sahil showed his presence of mind and solid defence to thwart Udit's strong challenge and emerge as the winner.

The results: Greco-Roman:
55kg: Gold: Lalit (SSCB) bt Vishvajit More (Mah) 'by fall'; **bronze:** Sarwan (Rly) bt Arshad (UP) 8-0, Neeraj Patel (MP) bt Harsh (MP) 4-1.
60kg: Gold: Sahil Kadyan (Har) bt Udit Patel (MP) 3-1; **bronze:** Sumit (Chd) bt Manish (Rly) 10-0, Parvesh (SSCB) bt Abhishek Kumar (Jha) 8-0.
63kg: Gold: Chetan (Rly) bt Sunny Kumar (Har) 8-0; **bronze:** Umesh (Del) bt Sagar Singh (Pun) 4-0, Gyanender (SSCB) bt Akshay (Chd) by injury.
67kg: Gold: Sachin Sehrawat (SSCB) bt Karanjit Singh (Pun) 3-1; **bronze:** Anil (Rly) bt Siddharth (Har) 8-3, Anuj Kumar (Del) bt Aditya (Utk) 9-1.
72kg: Gold: Kuldeep Malik (Rly) bt Ankit Gulia (SSCB) 'by fall'; **bronze:** Mahesh Rathore (MP) bt P. Uma Mahesh (AP) 8-0, Sourav Rana (UP) bt Deepak (Del) 10-5.
77kg: Gold: Aman (SSCB) bt Amit Kumar (Jha) 10-2; **bronze:** Sagar Thakran (Del) bt Nishant Phogat (Chd) 1-1 by criteria, Lovepreet Singh (Rly) bt Badal Chauhan (UP) 8-0.
82kg: Gold: Prince (Har) bt Rahul (SSCB) 3-2; **bronze:** Rohit Dahiya (Rly) bt Gulshan Chib (J-K) 9-0, Aniket Jadhav (Mah) bt Rajesh (Raj) 9-7.
87kg: Gold: Rohit (Rly) bt Karan Kamboj (Pun) 3-0; **bronze:** Vijay (Har) bt Kapil (Del) 5-3, Rohit Bura (SSCB) bt Akarsh Mishra (Utk) 9-0.
97kg: Gold: Nitesh Kumar (Rly) bt Amit Choudhary (Raj) 11-0; **bronze:** Deepanshu (SSCB) bt Vijender (Del) 9-0, Viresh Kundu (UP) bt Abhishek (HP) 9-0.
130kg: Gold: Joginder (Har) bt Uttam Rana (Rly) 8-4; **bronze:** Sonu (Del) bt Vivek Kumar (Jha) 8-0, Kuldeep (SSCB) bt Shabaaz Singh (Pun) 8-3.

Mascarenhas and Karumbaiah seal hat-trick of wins

MOTORSPORTS

Sports Bureau

Dean Mascarenhas and co-driver Gagan Karumbaiah lit up the K1000 Rally, completing a hat-trick of wins and sealing a one-two finish for TSI Racing alongside teammates Aditya Thakur and Virender Kashyap in Round 4 of the Blueband Sports FMSCI Indian National Rally Championship (INRC) at Gubbi, near Tumakuru on Sunday.

Pragathi Gowda became the first woman driver to win a rally round in the INRC2 class. Pragathi shot to fame first after winning the FIA Asia Pacific Cup talent hunt in 2022 but missed a drive in the Junior WRC by a whisker.

However, she returned to form alongside experienced co-driver M. Chandramouli in the INRC as she moved to INRC2 this season.

The duo won the class and finished 11th overall, emerging as the only finishers in INRC2.

Provisional results: Overall: 1. Dean Mascarenhas (Mangaluru) & Gagan Karumbaiah (Kodagu) 1:46:27.3s, 2. Adithya Thakur & Virendar Kashyap (both Himachal) 1:49:18.9s, 3. Shashank Jamwal (Himachal) & S. Raghuram (Coimbatore) 1:52:13.7s.
INRC2: 1. Pragathi Gowda & M. Chandramouli (both Bengaluru) 2:05.44.0s.
INRC3: 1. Shashank & S. Raghuram, 2. B. Vishak (Kerala) & Chiranth Jain (Karkala) 1:53:20.8s, 3. Jenu Johnson (Mysuru) & Lenin Joseph (Erode) 1:55:42.8.
Women: 1. Athira Murali & Arun Chakkalakkal (both Kottayam) 1:58:21.9s, 2. Phoebe Nongrum Dale (Shillong) & G. Sanath (Palakkad) 2:07:20.6s, 3. Tarushi Vikram (Chikkamagaluru) & Vybhav Mukund Rao (Bengaluru) 2:41:12.8s.

Table-toppers: Gagan, left, and Dean pose with their trophy. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

THE HINDU
EDUCATIONPLUS

GET THE EDGE Follow us facebook.com/thehindu twitter.com/the_hindu instagram.com/the_hindu

R. W. Alexander Jesudasan

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Fuel a knowledge economy

Why the One Nation One Subscription should be extended to private universities and colleges

With over 1,100 universities and nearly 45,000 colleges catering to around 4.5 crore students, India continues to strengthen its position as one of the world's largest education hubs. The country also aims to achieve 50% gross enrollment ratio (GER) in higher education by 2035. To achieve this target, India must strengthen all areas of higher education. Government and private institutions are working towards this, through various initiatives such as the One Nation One Subscription (ONOS).

What is ONOS?

The scheme aims to provide nationwide access to major scholarly e-journals from prominent publishers across disciplines such as STEM, Medicine, Management, Social Sciences and Humanities. The UGC's Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET) centre is to act as the implementing agency for ONOS. The scheme will give 6,400 institutions across the country (including central and state universities, colleges and research institutions) and 1.2 crore students, faculty, and researchers access to over 13,000 top journals including global ones such as *Elsevier*, *Springer-Nature*, *Taylor & Francis*, and *Wiley*. The Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) Act seeks to boost research HEIs in smaller towns with plans for central funding to support Indian authors in paying Article Processing Charges for quality open-access journals. However, private universities have been left out of the ambit of ONOS.

Before the 1990s, the higher education landscape was dominated by government-funded institutions. Economic liberalisation also led to various transformational measures including establishment of private universities and colleges. As a result, today, around 80% of students pursue higher education in private universities and colleges. In the last two decades, the number of these colleges and universities has expanded in response to the increasing demand for higher education.

Research focussed

Apart from offering programmes in emerging fields such as Robotics, AI, Fintech, Precision Technologies, Cybersecurity, Design Thinking and more, they also offer international exposure, industry-linked learning, interdisciplinary and flexible academic options and other benefits to students. Many of these institutions are located in urban and semi-urban areas and account for nearly 36% of the student population. Apart from this, many private universities have positioned themselves as research- and innovation-focussed, as Bansal et.al. (2019) note.

Some are very large with multiple campuses, modern infrastructure, and faculty members enabling them to compete with and match the research output of well-known government-funded institutions. Some even project themselves as the second-largest contributors to India's research output after the IITs. Quality publications, spending on faculty development and infrastructure creation, automation of libraries, including establishment of digital libraries, RFID, and other technological advances have all contributed to this.

Considering that private HEIs have made immense contributions to the education landscape and the growth manifested in many areas, extending ONOS to such institutions would help the country achieve the goal of a developed India by 2035. This will not strain the country's financial resources and willhelo India develop a robust knowledge economy.

The writer is the former rector of Reva University, Bengaluru; former Pro Vice-Chancellor of HITS, Chennai; and former Principal and Secretary of Madras Christian College, Chennai.

SCHOLARSHIPS

STEM Scholars
An initiative by Nasscom Foundation and supported by Optum CSR initiative.
Eligibility: Students in the third and fourth-year of B.E. or B.Tech in Computer Science, Pharmacy, and Life Sciences or pursuing in the fourth of fifth year of a five-year Integrated Engineering Programme in an institution in Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai or Hyderabad and have scored minimum 65% in Class 12 and have an annual family income not exceeding ₹800,000.
Rewards: ₹30,000.
Application: Online
Deadline: December 26
www.b4s.in/edge/NCSSP1

Tata Capital Pankh Scholarship
An initiative from Tata Capital
Eligibility: Indian students who are in Classes 11 and 12 or degree or diploma programmes in recognised institutions and have scored minimum 60% (80% for professional courses) in the previous academic year and have an annual family income not exceeding ₹250,000.
Rewards: Up to 80% of course fees
Application: Online
Deadline: December 26
www.b4s.in/edge/TCPS34

Suzlon Scholarship
An initiative by Suzlon Group
Eligibility: Female students in Class 9 and students in the first year of B.E. or B.Tech. or diploma in Engineering domiciled and enrolled in recognised institutions in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Daman, and Puducherry and have scored minimum 50% and have an annual family income not exceeding ₹600,000.
Rewards: ₹6,000 a year for school students; ₹60,000 a year for diploma students; ₹120,000 a year for those in degree programmes
Application: Online
Deadline: December 26
www.b4s.in/edge/SZSP4

Courtesy: Buddy4study.com

The Indian six

Six students have been selected as Rhodes Scholars-Elect for India 2026. They are Manhar Bansal from NLSIU, Bengaluru; Yogita from Université Paris-Saclay and Adam Mickiewicz University, Poland; Nikhita Sampath from St. Joseph's College of Law, Bengaluru; Taif Altaf, a Young India Fellow from Ashoka University, Sonipat; Suprabath Reddy Dwaram from ISI, Delhi, and Aniketa Kabir from Azim Premji University, Bengaluru.

KRISTU JAYANTI
(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)
Under Section 3 of UGC Act 1956
A CMI INSTITUTION | BENGALURU | INDIA

AWARDED A++ GRADE BY NAAC WITH CGPA 3.78 OUT OF 4

nirf 34th Rank (NIRF 2025)

A University Managed by CMI Fathers

INAUGURAL CEREMONY
of
KRISTU JAYANTI
(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)

December 15, 2025, Venue: University Main Campus

- Kristu Jayanti Institute of Management (KJIM)
- Kristu Jayanti Institute of Technology (KJIT)
- School of Commerce, Accounting & Finance
- School of Humanities & Social Sciences
- School of Business & Management
- School of Computational & Physical Sciences
- School of Law
- School of Biological & Forensic Sciences

More than 100 Undergraduate, Postgraduate, Postgraduate Diploma and PhD Programmes in Management, Computer Science, Physical Sciences, Commerce, Biological Sciences, Forensic Science, Humanities and Social Sciences & Law offered by six Schools and two Institutes

Internationally Accredited ACBSP ACCREDITED
UNSDG Hub
Green Campus with GOLD RATING by AICTE
Institution's Innovation Council (IIC) Ranking 2023-24 with 4 stars for Sixth Consecutive Time
DBT STAR COLLEGE
16 CONSECUTIVE OVERALL CHAMPIONS IN LITERARY AND CULTURAL FEST OF UNIVERSITIES (SIU/BNU)
CLEAN AND SMART CAMPUS First Place at National Level
BEST COLLEGE AWARD AMONG ALL CATHOLIC COLLEGES IN INDIA PRESENTED BY XAVIER BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIONS WITH INDIAN AND FOREIGN UNIVERSITIES

K. Narayanapura, Kothanur P.O., Bengaluru-560 077
Karnataka, India. | Tel : 080-68737777
E-mail : info@kristujayanti.com
Website: www.kristujayanti.edu.in

Beat this, Santa.

The first 6 EMIs are on us.
Upgrade to a Volkswagen before 25th December.*

Volkswagen FASTFEST

GLOBAL NCAP

4 year Standard Warranty
4 year Road Side Assistance
3 Free Services

Exchange through Certified Pre-Owned

Additional Scrappage Benefits***

Available across GeM, CSD & KPKB

Call 1800 102 0909

volkswagen.co.in

*Terms and conditions apply. Finance at the sole discretion of financiers. Calculation based on the Loan amount up to ₹10 Lakh, for 5-year loan at 8.75% Interest rate. Offer on select variants at the sole discretion of the dealer. Images are for representation purpose. Features and accessories shown may not be a part of standard equipment and are subject to change without prior notice. The actual car colour may vary. The dark shade on the glass is due to the lighting effect. **3 Free services applicable on 1 000 kilometers, 7 500 kilometers and 15 000 kilometers. In service, only labour charges are free. ***Additional scrappage benefit up to ₹20 000. To know more on the schemes, please visit your nearest Volkswagen dealership.

Authorised Dealers: Volkswagen Bangalore East-Old Madras Road: 9513942174; **Volkswagen Bangalore North: Thanisandra: Mobile:** 7032397999, 9606988828; **Old Airport Road (Sales Point): Mobile:** 7032397999; **Volkswagen Bangalore: Hosur Road: Mobile:** 8105583597; **Volkswagen Whitefield: B. Narayanapura: Mobile:** 9900010727, 9900021210; **Volkswagen Palace Cross: Mobile:** 9686601249; **Volkswagen Bangalore South (JP Nagar): Mobile:** 7397738004; **Volkswagen Bangalore North: Hebbal: Mobile:** 7032397999, 9100995753; **Volkswagen Bangalore Central: Richmond Road: Mobile:** 7032397999, 9281147546; **Volkswagen Palace Cross: Victoria Road (DWA): Mobile:** 9900035187; **Rajajinagar (Sales Point): Mobile:** 9900049174; **Hesaraghatta (Sales Point): Mobile:** 9900049174; **Volkswagen Tumkur: Sira Main Rd: Mobile:** 7032397999, 9100919214; **Volkswagen Hubli:** (0836) 2220000, 7760984531; **Volkswagen Belgaum:** (0831) 2477777, 9900022688, 9900022691; **Volkswagen Palace cross: Mysore Road:** 9900053496; **Volkswagen Mangalore:** (0824) 2433430, 2433530, 7829142030; **Volkswagen Mysore:** 9611586240; **Volkswagen City Center (Lalbagh Road):** 7032397999, 9281096188; **Volkswagen City Store Bangalore North (Yelehanka):** 7032397999, 9100666023; **Volkswagen Hassan:** 9611586225; **Volkswagen City Store Koramangala:** 9952220000; **Volkswagen Shivamogga:** 9606024733; **Volkswagen Bangalore South (Thalakatapura):** 9952220000.
Volkswagen Palace Cross - 9686601249, 9900064401.

M BG-BGE